A HANDBOOK ON STORY WRITING

REVISED EDITION

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS

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REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION

BY

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To

HELEN GRAY CONE

POET AND TEACHER

EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

HUNTER COLLEGE

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

In revising this work I have tested its principles by short-stories and short stories (with a hyphen or without) published since 1917 and have found that, in general, the principles still hold. To buttress this assertion I have illustrated throughout by recent instances, as well as by the classic examples formerly included, and I trust their obvious catholicity will be convincing.

I should like to express my gratitude for the tributes, through word of mouth, letters and stories, to the helpfulness of this book. It is pleasant to know that I share the success of many brief narratives which, I have been told, are indebted to it, narratives that mark the years from the first printing to the fourteenth in 1929.

New York City, B. C. W.
January 20, 1930.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

WHEN in 1910 I undertook the teaching of the short-story to a class of undergraduates at Hunter College, I found a dearth of books on the theory of story writing. There were Poe's examples and his body of criticism, from which help might be deduced; there was the pioneer "Philosophy" of Professor Matthews, and there were two or three texts whose chief value lay in their exposition of the genre. After no great length of time a growing suspicion asserted itself that although my students could write usually well, frequently with suggestion of charm and power, yet they were not always writing stories. They fell short of modern narrative requirement. As first aid they needed some formulation of the laws of structure. By a frankly academic and deductive process, that is to say, by study of the classic stories and the best current examples, I found obvious underlying principles, so obvious, my first reaction was that nobody had written them down because of their obviousness. But I gave them to my students, with happy results in improvement of manuscripts. The writers learned to direct their energies, with a diminution of diffuseness, to the accomplishment of stronger stories.

In the succeeding two or three years texts poured forth, as a glance at the appended bibliography will inform the reader. Many of these stimulated the student; most of them in one respect or other helped the teacher. Yet about the time, 1913, I took charge of the story

writing course in Extension Teaching, Columbia University, I could find no volume which aided the amateur definitely in construction. Here, again, the primary and fundamental laws of structure as I had evolved them, proved useful to the men and women bent on learning the art of the short-story with an eye to publication. Their stories in *The Atlantic, Scribner's The Century, The Metropolitan, Everybody's* and a number of minor publications prove that they have acquired a degree of expertness. And this fact leads me to comment on a division of opinion which has within recent years, and in the extended vogue of the short-story, found proclamation. One camp asserts that the short-story has no laws of technique,—a statement made, without exception, by those who have not set themselves to learn it. Members of the opposite camp declare that technique or formula has deadened the story. Truth would seem to lie between these extremes. The first opinion needs no comment; but it may be observed that the lover of fiction who demands only something under ten thousand words that is "interesting" will be the first to find interest faltering, though he may not know why, if the structure is inadequate to support the warp and woof of story material. The second camp is right in this respect: the story is so much a matter of form it can be learned. Conceivably it can be learned by persons who are endowed with no supreme literary gift. There are examples of best literature which are not short-stories; there are stories which are not literature. A great era of advertising made possible, if it did not demand, more magazines and with them the cheap story. (But I must not fail to state that the price frequently has nothing to do with the value of

the story for which the price is paid.) The unworthy examples exist by virtue of the worthier. Compare the stories of *Blackwood's* of seventy years ago with those of the present day, or compare the short-stories of the latter nineteenth century with those of the present, and you can come to one conclusion only: this is the golden age of short-story literature.

It will be perceived that wherever possible I discuss story technique in terms of the drama, and I do so because the two terms, story and drama, are so closely interlocked each can best be apprehended through comparison with the other. Reciprocal characterisation serves to convey the interdependence of types. And in noticing the relations between these type forms, I am moved to ask that terminology in this volume be taken not as iron bound or hard and fast. As Henry James has said in his "Art of Fiction," "People often talk of these things [description, dialogue, incident, etc.] as if they had a kind of internecine distinctness, instead of melting into each other at every breath, and being intimately associated parts of one general effort of expression." Yet it remains true that analysis reveals such varied elements in composition, and also true that the young writer or the amateur synthesises better if he is aware they exist. Fusion, he must learn, occurs when the spark of life kindles the elements into a glowing whole.

Within the confines of this book I have indicated by examples chosen to illustrate one thing or another those authors who are the masters. Their art has had the adequate purpose of representing the workings of life, and it has had the beneficent effect of entertaining. And

if it satisfies in these two particulars, it satisfies the chief requirements of the art of fiction.

I desire to express my obligations and gratitude to my assistant Miss Shirley V. Long for reading the chapters of the book and giving valuable suggestions. Thanks and acknowledgments are due certain authors and publishers for permission to quote from works by way of illustrating and emphasising definite technical features. To Messrs. Harper and Brothers I am indebted for the passage from "The Revolt of 'Mother'" ("A New England Nun and Other Stories," by Mary E. Wilkins, copyright, 1891), and also that from "At Home to His Friends" ("Seventeen," by Booth Tarkington, copyright, 1915, 1916, by the Metropolitan Magazine Company); to the George H. Doran Company for the paragraph from Irvin Cobb's "Local Color" (Copyright, 1916, by George H. Doran Company); to the John Lane Company for the selection from Neil Lyons's "Six-penny Pieces" (Third edition, 1914); to Messrs. Doubleday, Page and Company for the brief selections from Rudyard Kipling's "A Second-Rate Woman" ("Under the Deodars," edition, 1913), and "Mary Postgate" ("A Diversity of Creatures," copyright, 1917), for the longer passages from O. Henry's "The Whirligig of Life" ("Whirligigs"), "The Furnished Room" ("The Four Million"), and "Proof of the Pudding" ("Strictly Business"), all from the Authorised Edition of O. Henry's works, and for the quotation from Joseph Conrad's "The Art of Writing" (1914); to Charles Scribner's Sons for citations from Henry James's Prefaces (Collected Works, copyright, 1909), and from Henry Van Dyke's Preface to "The Ruling Passion," copyright, 1901; from Robert Louis Steven-

sons's "Weir of Hermiston," (copyright, 1896); and from "Plain Fin, Paper Hanger" ("The Under Dog," copyright, 1903); to E. P. Dutton and Company, and to Mr. Harold Paget for the paragraphs from Leonard Merrick's "The Tragedy of a Comic Song" ("Whispers about Women," copyright, 1912, by Mitchell Kennerley); to the Ridgway Company for the selection from Eleanor Hallowell Abbott's "The Mean Little Town"; to the Curtis Publishing Company for the passage from Norman Duncan's "The Last Shot in the Locker," and to the Fleming H. Revell Company for the same passage which occurs, with certain changes, in "Billy Topsail, M. D.," copyright, 1916.

New York City, B. C. W.
September 5, 1917.

TWO PARABLES AND A DIALOGUE

PARABLE OF THE CHAIR-MAKERS

GEOGOTH sat down upon the cylinder of Log, separated from the Fallen Tree at cost of much labor with his stone ax. "Ugh, rough!" he felt, rather than spoke, for speech was backward in the abysm of time that was his Day. He began to hack at the Bark.

Some years later Geogoth's son upended the Log, smoothed the top, and so made a Seat more to his liking. Geogoth's grandson removed a slice of the cylinder, fixed it to a tripod, and found the Stool a convenient improvement. Geogoth's great-grandson, a lazy fellow, placed the Stool against his hut wall, there to ease his Backbone and bask in the sunshine. The sun had, however, an incomprehensible way of slipping about and leaving the boy in shadow. He fashioned a back to the old worn seat, and now moved from sunny spot to sunny spot. Geogoth's bright great-great-grandson invented crude arms: behold the Chair!

By this time quite a number of Geogoth's progeny peopled the earth who argued, having learned how to argue, whether Chairs were to be or not to be. They were to be. Seat, legs, back, and arms were established. What else?

A great-granddaughter of the thirty-third generation introduced cushions of moss. "So comfortable!" "But so inartistic!" and war was waged by word of mouth, for language had made considerable progress. Cushions

were banned, but the granddaughter's granddaughter, a jazzy Young Thing, conceived the idea of the rocking chair. She chose the suitor who made the neatest rockers. Again dissension arose: To rock or not to rock swayed the descendants of Geogoth. The President of the Moot deliberated a day and a night and a year, and at length decreed that rocking chairs and rockerless chairs, cushioned or uncushioned, might be used in the Best Society. Afterward all went merry as a marriage bell up to that day when an awkward, refractory, rebellious son of Geogoth's forty-fifth descendant broke his father's Best Parlor Chair.

"Set you to work, son and construct me another chair," commanded the old gentleman, who was not without certain Worthy Suspicions.

"Gladly will I father," quoth the Boy, who was Very Modern. "Who, except the Old and Afflicted would sit on one of those demodé Chippendales and Sheratons and Hepplewhites? I will make you a chair of Simple Lines, True to Life, wholly Artistic."

After many days, this Artist struggled from the Forest, whither he had gone for Meditation and Labor. He bore triumphantly a two-foot Log, severed with difficulty from a Tree felled by his own Prowess. This he set up against the wall, opposite the Venetian mirror, and bade his friends come for to admire. The young men, who found their father's chairs outworn, approved greatly and fashioned others like unto the Neo-Stone Age Seat. Before long, another Modern Child invented a back. . . . By and by, Sheraton and Chippendale and Hepplewhite once more graced Many Mansions.

PARABLE OF THE ROADS

A traveler in a strange land would know the way to a castle, set on a height, and inquired of a reverend senior returning thence.

"The way thither," counseled the old man, "is farther than you would suspect, if you choose the road by which most men journey; but I, who have been many times over the highway, can point out to you some of the—"

"Thanks," interrupted the traveler, "I will discover a way of my own."

He made a path, through brake and briar, but arrived at the castle later than the next traveler who followed the old one's directions. To his satisfaction, however, he lived to see his path become also a broad highway.

FRAGMENT OF A DIALOGUE, 14000 A.D.

"You tell me, perceptor, that the air-plane was different from the automobile, that the motor car was vastly different from the barouche, victoria, or landau, and that these differed even more from the ox-wagon. I have studied well the ancient prints of these objects and today can tell you the common use of them."

"And, my dear young antiquarian, what were these functions?"

"Were they not chiefly employed for conveying a person or persons from one place to another on the earth's surface?"

"Right, quite right. What do you find to be the essential feature of each vehicle?"

"They were valueless, these machines, if no motor power was available."

"Why?"

"Because no journey might be made."

"You have done well, my disciple. For even in those times, there were those not only children who believed they journeyed if they sat in the wagon or carriage or plane, fixed to one spot."

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A HANDBOOK ON STORY WRITING

CHAPTER I

DEFINITIONS AND CHARACTERISATIONS

Difficulty in defining this form of fiction; what the short-story is not; anecdote, incident, tale, novel, sketch; various definitions quoted; sifting of these definitions; the essentials of the short-story; essentials embodied in a working definition; discussion of this definition; art in general and in the short-story; value of struggle emphasised by a comparison of the short-story and the drama; exercises.

WHAT is a short-story? In defining the term, there is the temptation to limit it so closely as to exclude narratives which may be regarded properly as falling under this class of fiction; or there is the corresponding danger of constructing too inclusive a definition. In the second place,[1] the short-story is a comparatively recent development, and like all young organisms, it is in process of growth, if not of evolution; hence, any determining of its status must be tentative. Again, there are many varieties; and in proportion as the critic prefers, however catholic his taste, one variety to another, he drifts toward that as

[1] Charles S. Baldwin has pointed out, in his Preface to "American Short-Stories," that Poe's "Berenice" (1835) represents the arrival of the form in the English language. "Mateo Falcone" (1829) antedates Poe's story by a half a dozen years.

his ideal. Or, guarding against his individual preference, he chooses to characterise rather than to define.

At the outset, therefore, let us consider the characteristics from which we may formulate a working definition of this genre, to-day the preferred medium of the fiction writer.

First, then, by comparing the short-story with closely related forms, the student should learn what it is *not*. From the monograph of the late Brander Matthews,[2] to the most recent texts, opinions agree that the short-story is not a novel, a condensed novel, or a novelette. Its plot is less complex, and it creates a more unified impression. Nor is it a sketch, for in a sketch nothing may happen; a sketch may be of still life only. It is not an anecdote; for the anecdote presents a situation and one brief dramatic instant. It is not a mere Incident;[3] for the Incident concerns itself with one line of interest; is usually briefer; and, the best test, is of less moment or weight than the short-story. It is not a tale; for the tale may lack proportion, may show no progressive heightening, no nice adjustment to scale,[4] and it may fail to produce a single emotional effect. Yet it is clear that the short-story may approach in length, if in no other particular, the novelette. One artist of the brush may, because of his individual manner, lay on twice as many strokes as another artist painting the same subject. And whether made in five hundred or five thousand strokes, the finished picture may fill a 2 x3 frame. A student should suffer no bewilderment from such appallingly definite statements as, "I've

[2] The Philosophy of the Short-Story, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901. Written 1884, revised later.

[3] Capitalised for sake of distinction. See page 52.

[4] See Baldwin's Preface, *op. cit.*

material for a three thousand word story." A two thousand word O. Henry story would become one of ten thousand for Henry James. For example, Henry James's "The Turn of the Screw" and Edith Wharton's "Ethan Frome" are long short-stories. Obviously, also, the sketch or vignette shades gradually into the short-story. Kipling's "The City of Dreadful Night" is a sketch, a series of pictures observed in a night walk. His "Lispeth," a sketch, too, is something more. Dorothy Canfield's "Uncle Giles" is a brief fictive biography; her "Avunculus," a biography, too, is something more. In both "Lispeth" and "Avunculus," the something more is a series of acts that lead to a climax. Zona Gale's "Biography of Blade" illustrates its own title; yet, here, too is the added element, the significant climax, which gave the small opus a place in "Best Short Stories of 1924." The word "tale" particularly annoys one who would separate it definitively from the short-story. Here, a critic declares emphatically that "Rip Van Winkle" is a short-story; there, another rules it out. Irving's Tales at least have place in the development of the modern form. He recognised that the sketch or the short tale must be written word for word more carefully than the longer story: "The author must be continually piquant; woe to him if he makes an awkward sentence or writes a stupid page."[5] He recognised, that is, the nicety of execution. But he approached the short-story only by way of unconscious evolution. In the main, the same thing is true of Hawthorne, who, however, progressed further. He wrote a

[5] See Irving's Letter to Henry Brevoort. The Life and Letters of Washington Irving, by P. M. Irving, Vol. II, page 227.

few short-stories which, though perfect specimens, are not typical examples of his tales. "Rappaccini's Daughter" takes high rank as a short-story; "Lady Eleanore's Mantle" is a tale, strongly infused with fancifully didactic allegory. The evolution of the short-story shows that the tale is its progenitor. Boccaccio's "Decameron" and Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" are the great mediæval predecessors. Apart, however, from the historical significance and its indication of type, the word "tale" is not infrequently used by contemporary writers as synonymous with short-story. Edith Wharton's "Tales of Men and Ghosts" is an illustration of the word used inclusively; the volume contains examples of both types.

Even the anecdote may assume the form of the short-story, though with doubtful success. O. Henry's "A Lickpenny Lover" and "The Girl and the Habit" are instances of the anecdotal short-story which, by no means admirable, yet illustrate the fact that the anecdote may be expanded into the longer form. And, finally, the Incident, as its subject matter becomes of greater weight or its treatment more elaborate, may be coalescent with the short-story.

Not identical with any of these forms, the short-story is separated from them by imperceptible dividing lines. And just as it recedes to one or another of the allied types, so it departs from its own ideal. In order to determine this ideal, let us examine the ground generally accepted as the province of the short-story. And let us follow an approximate historical order.

Brander Matthews, in his essay, says: "An idea logically developed by one possessing the sense of form and the gift of style is what we look for in a short-story." And he adds presently, laying emphasis upon plot, "The

short-story is nothing if there is no story to tell." He insists also upon neatness of structure and polish of execution. "The construction must always be logical, adequate, harmonious." Elsewhere he says "—the short-story must do one thing and it must do this completely and perfectly; it must not loiter or digress, it must have unity of action, unity of temper, unity of tone, unity of colour, unity of effect; and it must vigilantly exclude everything that might interfere with its singleness of intention." Totality of effect had been practised by Poe in his story writing; it had been advocated by him as a poetic ideal in "The Philosophy of Composition." From Poe's theory, Brander Matthews evolved in part his philosophy upon which a number of writers later based their definitions.[6]

Among the essentials of a short story incorporated in the definitions of Henry Seidel Canby,[7] Clayton Hamilton,[8] W. B. Pitkin,[9] Carl Grabo[10] and others is unity, or singleness of effect or impression. To unity of effect were added by these or later definers: emotional appeal, dramatic quality, and the conveyance of an idea larger than the story itself.

Critics since 1918, and even before, observe among certain writers a disregard of structure and an abandon-

[6] See Bibliography, page 315 ff., for works of these authors and others.

[7] A Study of the Short Story, by Henry Seidel Canby, Henry Holt and Co., 1913. P. 1.

[8] A Manual of the Art of Fiction, by Clayton Hamilton, Doubleday, Page and Co., 1918. P. 177. This work is a revision of the authors's earlier "Materials and Methods of Fiction," first published, 1908.

[9] The Art and the Business of Story Writing, by W. B. Pitkin, The Macmillan Co., 1912. P. 21.

[10] The Art of the Short Story, by Carl Grabo, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914. P. 284.

ment of characteristics formerly marking the type. John T. Frederick observes: "The aim of short story writing must no longer be defined in terms of approximation of artificial canons of form and method, but primarily in terms of the sincerity of the writer and the significance of his material . . . what we aim to produce is a brief narrative of significant human experience."[11] Edith Mirrielees remarks, much to the same end, "In this first fraction of the twentieth century a short story is a fiction in prose of a somewhat limited magnitude—that and no more."[12] Again, essaying a definition, she writes in italics: "A short story is a brief prose narrative, primarily imaginative, which, by means of the adhesion of every part to one central purpose, renders a coherent and interpretative account of some phase of action, character, or mood."[13]

Sir Roger de Coverley was fond of repeating, "Well, there is much to be said on both sides." True enough, significant writers have been mutinous; true enough they have revolted. It is equally true that if they have survived they have achieved, both in form and substance, that which is admirable; not infrequently, they have arrived at the same goal toward which the conservatives travel. This goal is a well-built story. It is more than probable that if all the laws of the sonnet were forgotten and a poet of genius wished to express in rhymed measures a thesis or emotion adapted to its scope, he would achieve, at length, approximately the sonnet form. Meantime, he

[11] A Handbook of Short Story Writing, by John T. Frederick, Alfred A. Knopf, 1924. Pp. 12, 13.
[12] Significant Contemporary Stories, by Edith Mirrielees, Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1929. Preface.
[13] Writing the Short Story, by Edith Mirrielees, Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1929. P. 2.

might experiment so well as to create something greater.

Thousands of short-stories have been written; several thousands have been published annually since 1920. The greater number of these (not all, to be sure) which have recommended themselves illustrate the following statements: 1. The short-story is a prose narrative of somewhat limited magnitude. 2. It concerns itself mainly with one impression or effect. 3. It centers, usually, about one incident, situation, or character; or it is marked by a dominant purpose. 4. It possesses dramatic interest. 5. It shows increasing appreciation of the point of view. In connection with this final statement, it may be added that the "stream of consciousness" novel as well as shorter story is but an application of the principle embodied in the point of view. The academic ideal emphasizes form probably, as one author insists, because canons are easily taught. The publisher's ideal emphasizes human appeal, to which the reader reacts emotionally, doubtless because the publisher wishes laudably enough to sell his wares.

In connection with the foregoing statements I suggest the definition: The short-story is a prose narrative artistically presenting characters in a struggle or complication which has a definite outcome. If the action occurs in a brief time and in a closely circumscribed space, the story approaches the extreme or ultimate type form. "The Sire de Maletroit's Door," by Stevenson; "Mrs. Adis," by Sheila Kaye-Smith; "Swept and Garnished," by Kipling; "The Idiot," by Arnold Bennett; "Blue Murder," by Wilbur Daniel Steele; "The One Hundred Dollar Bill," by Booth Tarkington; "The Last Visit," by Conrad Aiken; "The Love Nest," by Ring W. Lardner—these narratives,

in their close limitation of time and place, consciously or unconsciously obey the laws of the "Greek Unities."

In order to effect a full and clear understanding, let us examine the definition just laid down. "Narrative" needs no explanation, but it should be repeated that although the action of the short-story is told, not presented, yet modern writers usually prefer to let the telling unfold itself as fully as possible through the characters themselves, prefer, in short, to approach the dramatic form. The popularity of Ernest Hemingway's stories, for instance, owes itself in large measure to the skill with which he makes the characters convey the action.[14] For another group of readers Conrad Aiken succeeds by recounting the successive phases of a character's mental action, frequently in contrast to some outer act or series of acts.[15]

"Artistically presenting," the next phrase in the definition, offers opportunity for calling attention to something of the principle underlying all fiction. "What is art?" has been asked as many times as that other sphinx question, "What is truth?" It would be disproportionate, if not futile, here to enter upon a formal discussion of art; but it may be helpful to summarise a few characteristics. Art, then, is primarily human skill versus nature. Art is an imitation,[16] which succeeds by representation, by typi-

[14] "The Killers," and "The Undefeated," for example.

[15] For example, in "The Last Visit," and "By My Troth, Nerissa!"

[16] "'Art imitates Nature,' says Aristotle, in a phrase that has been much misunderstood. It has been taken to mean that art is a copy or reproduction of natural objects. But by 'Nature' Aristotle never means the outside world of created things, he means rather creative force, what produces, not what has been produced. We might almost translate the Greek phrase, 'Art, like Nature, creates things,' 'Art acts like Nature in producing things.' These things are, first and foremost, human things, human action."—Ancient Art and Ritual, by Jane Ellen Harrison, LL.D., Litt.D., Henry Holt and Company, London, 1913.

fying, rather than by selecting the too unusual object or event from life. "This must be put into a story," the novice says; "this extraordinary situation is too good to lose." Amateurs need constant warning against this pitfall. Editor and teacher and critic are used to hearing, "You say my story lacks verisimilitude, that the occurrence is too unusual. But I tell you, it really happened!" That the account is from life makes no difference, or rather may make the difference that is so much the worse for fiction. (It probably would not happen in fiction if it happened in life.) For fiction should represent the typical, not the exaggerated or the bizarre. The artist in Henry James's "The Real Thing" comments on his preference for the "represented subject over the real one: the defect of the real one was so apt to be a lack of representation. I liked things that appeared; then one was sure." In this thematic narrative, the author entertainingly and convincingly presents the defect of the real. Major and Mrs. Monarch, the real thing socially, failed to represent the type, whereas Miss Churm the Cockney model and Oronte the orange vendor succeeded.

Do not suppose that a good fact story will make a good fiction story. Do not make the similar error of thinking a slavish copy will produce in fiction the effect corresponding to that produced by the original in actuality. "The beginner must take to heart the truth that a close copy of life may fail to represent life. Within his own world, the writer seeks to imitate. That world is governed by laws with which he must be familiar, the operations of which he must understand, if under their dominance he would successfully represent. The sequence of details, for example, in a successful story may be dif-

ferent from the sequence in real life. The writer has worked out a problem in arrangement with a view to correct effect."[17]

"Life, as it happens, fails often to have a recognisable pattern, like the orderly things called stories . . . for you may bleed your heart out and finally die of the wound, and yet the pain of which you die, the drama which caused your heart to bleed, will have had neither logical beginning nor definite end, and in the whole course of it, though it has been life and death to you, there will have been none of those first aids to the reader—suspense, dramatic contrast, or plot. You have suffered and died, but it hasn't made a story."[18]

These two paragraphs emphasize that art must be representative, that it is life plus something more.

Another requisite of artistic work is that it must move the emotions. As science transmits knowledge, art is a human activity transmitting feelings. Art transmutes the truths of science from the region of perception to the region of emotion. The finished statue of a child brings a rush of tenderness; the sweep of opera exalts to high ecstasy; the drama forces laughter or tears. "It [the drama] consists of passion, which gives the actor his opportunity; and that passion must progressively increase, or the actor, as the piece proceeded, would be unable to carry the audience from a lower to a higher pitch of interest and emotion."[19] If the reader of the short-story is held in suspense; if he is awed, thrilled, moved to tears, smiles or laughter, then for him the author is an artist.

[17] Short Stories in the Making, R. W. Neal, page 151.
[18] Mary Heaton Vorse, in "A Child's Heart."
[19] "A Humble Remonstrance," R. L. Stevenson.

The effect of the short-story is measured always by the emotional reaction. Emotions are governed by laws; an understanding of these laws will aid a writer in his appeal to the emotions. The process is not so simple, not so wooden, as the machinery of puppet moving, but the mechanism is not the less necessary.

"Fiction—if it at all aspires to be art—appeals to temperament," says Joseph Conrad in "The Art of Writing." "And, in truth it must be, like painting, like music, like all art, the appeal of one temperament to all the other innumerable temperaments whose subtle and resistless power endows passing events with their true meaning, and creates the moral, the emotional atmosphere of the place and time. Such an appeal to be effective must be an impression conveyed through the senses; and, in fact, it cannot be made in any other way, because temperament, whether individual or collective, is not amenable to persuasion. All art, therefore, appeals primarily to the senses, and the artistic aim when expressing itself in written words must also make its appeal through the senses, if its high desire is to reach the secret spring of responsive emotions. It must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, to the colour of painting, and to the magic suggestiveness of music—which is the art of arts. . . ."

Art, then, is representative, and appeals to the senses. Writers, dramatists, sculptors, musicians, artists of the brush—all agree on these two essentials. Perhaps the ultimate distinction between the artist and the artisan lies in the principle of *suggestion.* The distinctive genius of Kipling flashes out in a daring economy, by which he *conveys* much more than his sentence or paragraph *says.*

This principle of suggestion may so operate as to secure effective emotional reaction; it may stop short at titillating the reader's fancy, or galvanising his attention. Its use means a saving to the reader of energy required to grasp or visualise the object or act. In "Mary Postgate," for example, occurs an episode of bomb-dropping. After the explosion, Mary and Nurse Eden heard

"a child's shriek, dying into a wail. . . . Nurse Eden snatched up a sheet drying before the fire, ran out, lifted something from the ground, and flung the sheet round it. The sheet turned scarlet, and half her uniform, too, as she bore the load into the kitchen. It was little Edna Gerritt, aged nine, whom Mary had known since her baby days.

" 'Am I hurted bad?' Edna asked, and died between Nurse Eden's dripping hands. The sheet fell aside, and for an instant, before she could shut her eyes, Mary saw the ripped and shredded body."

In this swiftly moving passage, restraint and suggestion create for Kipling his emotional effect. When he writes of a snake folding itself in oozy triangles, he shocks attention by the vivid picture. When he says, in "Captains Courageous," that Harvey saw a long line of portholes flash past, he suggests the rapidity and the length of the ocean liner in a way to dazzle the reader, and to compel the critic's admiration for his lean economy.

Of the power of suggestion George Meredith writes illustratively in the early pages of "The Amazing Marriage": "The man Charles Dump is no more attractive to me than a lump of clay. How could he be? But suppose I took up the lump and told you that there where I found

it, *that lump of clay had been rolled over and flung off by the left wheel of the prophet's Chariot of Fire before it mounted aloft and disappeared in the heavens above,* you would examine it and cherish it and have the scene present with you, you may be sure; and magnificent descriptions would not be one-half so persuasive. And that is what we call, in my profession, Art, if you please."

Art is an imitation which so represents life as to affect the reader's emotions. The greater the writer's skill in suggestion, the more economically, and hence vividly, will he produce his representation.

The definition further makes use of the plural "characters." It would appear that a short-story must contain at least two characters, for otherwise there would be no struggle. But it should be remembered that in some stories characteristics or traits take the place of the inclusive term, "characters." Stevenson's "Markheim," for example, presents a struggle between Markheim's conscience and inclination to evil; Wilbur Daniel Steele's "The Anglo-Saxon" dramatizes in Diplo the conflict between heredity and environment; Virginia Woolf's "The New Dress" reveals the pitiful vacillation of Mabel Waring, struggling like a fly in a saucer of milk.

In discussing the phrase "struggle or complication," let us make a momentary comparison of the short-story with the drama.[20] Any student of the play knows that there is no play without a plot characterised by a struggle. "A good serious play must therefore be founded on one of the passionate *cruces* of life, where duty and inclination

[20] "When Aristotle, in his 'Poetics,' undertook to lay down the principles by which tragedy ought to be constructed, he gave the common and essential principles for the construction of all fiction —especially for the construction of the short-story." Melville Davisson Post, in "The Blight."

come nobly to the grapple."[21] This struggle may have its modifications—there may be a chase, purely physical; there may be a difficulty to overcome, an obstacle to remove, a mystery to solve. In its highest phase, the conflict is waged between intellects, or between the opposing parts of one man's intellect. Hamlet is at odds with himself, as with the world. If now to the essential struggle is added entanglement, the interest of the play is increased. The relations of Hamlet and Ophelia, for example, form one line of interest which will inevitably have bearing on the main line of interest, Hamlet's struggle to be revenged. Hamlet's relations to the Queen will likewise be a cause of entanglement. Besides these obvious relations there are others, all of which unite in making the play a masterpiece of entanglement as well as one of intense moral struggle. In "A Half Hour," a Barrie *tour de force,* the struggle is from start to finish in the mind of Lillian Garson; but if there were not the entanglement arising because of her relations with Hugh Paton, the play-goer would scarcely sit so enthralled. The struggle in this play, in its various changing phases, is possible only because of the entanglement. In the sombre tragedy by F. Tennyson Jesse and H. M. Harwood, 'The Black Mask," the struggle is lost in the entanglement. When Vashti Glasson and her lover strive to get rid of her black-masked husband, the husband manages to exchange places with the lover. The revelation to her is the close of the play which the audience, having already seen her failure in the struggle, awaits as the outcome of the entanglement.

Now the plot of the short-story, no less than the plot of the drama, demands a struggle or conflict. "Struggle"

[21] "A Humble Remonstrance," R. L. Stevenson.

will have consideration hereafter, as will "complication"; but since the latter term has been variously used by critics it should be remembered that complication will be used in this volume in its primary sense of "entanglement" or "intermingling of parts." Entanglement suggests an intertwining of threads; a picture of entangled threads illustrates the complication arising from two or more lines of interest. For example, in Mary Wilkins Freeman's "The Revolt of 'Mother,'" the main interest, or line of interest, has to do with the struggle between Mr. Penn and his wife; the second, or subordinate interest, with Nanny and her love affairs. The slight entanglement results from combining these lines. In "A Day Off," by Alice Brown, the main line of interest is that developing the struggle in Abigail's mind. The second line of interest, again, is that limning Claribel's love story. The combination or entanglement is the making of the narrative. In Louis Bromfield's "The Apothecary," the thread of interest that is Daisy's struggle to survive entwines itself with the thread that is the love story. The event bringing final defeat to the one brings also a happy ending to the other.

Struggle and complication connote other steps, which will be treated fully under Plot.

The final clause of the definition, "which has a definite outcome," is necessary, to suggest that the action should be finished. The struggle should be terminated conclusively and with satisfaction to the reader; the end—for which the first part is constructed—should be attained. No reader is satisfied with a story which leaves the oppos-

ing forces still struggling, or with a complication that lacks solution.[22]

Cross the bridge from 1915 to 1930 and examine the present field of the short story. The growth is more luxuriant; more varieties have sprung up. If—to pursue the figure—everybody had found the seed and knew how to raise the type fifteen years ago, today everybody has learned how to hybridize and burbank his crop. To emerge from the figure, the Great War, responsible for break-down of old standards and setting up of new, affected also the aims and purposes of the fiction writer, whether of America, England, or France. There is still the story true to type and there is a story that entertains in a way wholly different from the older way. With the advent of Sherwood Anderson, Aldous Huxley, and Paul Morand—if we illustrate the new school by representatives of three countries—arrived a variation, the significance of which none can refuse to admit. Notwithstanding this development, a left-hand liberal wing of the short story which may rout the right hand or conservative wing, type characteristics still persist. This book will observe, throughout, the common characteristics as well as those peculiar to each division.

[22]There are apparent exceptions to the requirement that the struggle be ended, the complication untied. For, as Brander Matthews has pointed out, the end of a story may be a conundrum: witness, "The Lady or the Tiger?" But in such an instance the trick of leaving the reader in the balance between two conclusions must have compensation. Stockton flatters the reader by an appeal to his judgment, by seeming to talk over the matter with him. Moreover, the first time this trick was performed, it was appreciated by the surprised reader. Its repetition even by Stockton himself was not successful.

EXERCISES FOR CHAPTER I

(a) Test the following stories by the definitions offered in this chapter. (b) Observe the close circumscription of time or place or both:

Arnold Bennett's "The Idiot," Katharine Brush's "Him and Her," Margaret Leech's "Manicure," Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers," Katherine Mansfield's "Life of Ma Parker," and "Mr. Reginald Peacock's Day," Willa Cather's "The Sculptor's Funeral," Conrad Aiken's "Spider, Spider," Mariel Brady's "Peter Projects," Thomas Hardy's "The Three Strangers," William Wymarck Jacobs's "The Monkey's Paw," Robert Louis Stevenson's "Markheim," "A Lodging for the Night," and "The Sire de Maletroit's Door," Rudyard Kipling's "The Mark of the Beast," and "Wireless," August Strindberg's "Half a Sheet of Foolscap," Guy de Maupassant's "A Coward," O. Henry's "The Furnished Room," Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado," Irvin S. Cobb's "An Occurrence up a Side Street," Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Bubbles," "The Silver Sword," and "Pioneers," A. E. Coppard's "Communion," and "Arabesque: The Mouse," Stacy Aumonier's "Miss Bracegirdle Does Her Duty," Mary Butts's "Deosil," Sheila Kaye-Smith's "A Wedding Morn," Ben Ames Williams's "One Crowded Hour," Ring W. Lardner's "Anniversary," and "There Are Smiles," Richard Hughes's "The Ghost."

For unity of impression study "Home is the Sailor," by Bill Adams, "River Witch," by Roark Bradford, "The Actor," by Nunnally Johnson, "Curtains," by Fiswoode Tarleton, "The Scarlet Woman," by Louis Bromfield (This story is reprinted in the author's "Awake and Re-

hearse," under the title, "The Life and Death of Vergie Winters."), "Fear," by James Warner Bellah, "Night Club," by Katharine Brush, "Monkey Motions," by Eleanor Mercein Kelly, "Command," by Albert Richard Wetjen, "Symphonesque," by Arthur Huff Fauset, "The Man Who Saw through Heaven," by Wilbur Daniel Steele.

Study Ambrose Bierce's "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge," for a *tour de force* treatment of the time element; Fitz-James O'Brien's "The Diamond Lens," for a similar treatment of the place element; H. G. Wells's "The New Accelerator," and "The Man Who Could Work Miracles," for magical treatment of time and place.

Which of the stories mentioned above satisfy the tentative definition of the short story once offered by Katharine Holland Brown: ". . . . It's a universal experience, put into a duodecimo edition."?

"Perhaps the shortest successful story on record," says Charles Caldwell Dobie, "is as follows:

'Three wise men of Gotham went to sea in a bowl.
If the bowl had been stronger, my tale had been longer.'

This narrative has also the virtue of suggestion: the greater the suggestion, the greater the story. In other words, a story is artistically successful in proportion to the collaboration exacted from the reader."

Has this critique on the "Three Wise Men" taken account of all essentials?

Is the following narrative too condensed to make an emotional appeal?

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN

By Selwyn Grattan

The empty vial—the odour of bitter almonds—and in the chair what had been a man.

On the desk this note:

"Farewell. From the day of our marriage I have known. I love you. I love my friend. Better that I should go and leave you two to find happiness than that I should stay and the three of us wear out wretched lives. Again farewell—and bless you.

"ROBERT."

(*Life,* July 6, 1915. Copyright, *Life* Publishing Co.)

Compare with the stories just quoted this selection from *The New York Evening Post,* June 11, 1915: . . . The commercial short-story to-day is an affair of at least five thousand words and a very sophisticated bit of writing. The secret of success in that field has been described by one successful editor as consisting in writing all round one's subject. This we do with admirable technical skill in the way of sustaining interest by the use of subsidiary incident, suspense, and above all, by the force of style. . . . It may be that the editors have discovered that between five and seven thousand words is the proper length demanded by the psychological necessities of the tired business man. (Article entitled "Short Stories in Verse.")

Among the stories awarded prizes by the committees of the O. Henry Memorial Award are the following:

"Snake Doctor," by Irvin S. Cobb (1922); "Innocence," by Rose Wilder Lane (1922); "Prelude," by Edgar Valentine Smith (1923); "A Friend of Napoleon," by Richard Connell (1923); "The Spring Flight," by

Inez Haynes Irwin (1924); "Margaret Blake," by Chester T. Crowell (1924); "Mr. Bisbee's Princess," by Julian Street (1925); "Splendid with Swords," by Wythe Williams (1925); "Bubbles," by Wilbur Daniel Steele (1926); "Death in the Woods," by Sherwood Anderson (1926); "Child of God," by Roark Bradford (1927); "The Killers," by Ernest Hemingway (1927); "The Parrot," by Walter Duranty (1928); "The Peculiar Treasure of Kings," by Marjory Stoneman Douglas (1928); "Big Blonde," by Dorothy Parker (1929); "The Home-Sick Ladies," by Sidney Howard (1929).

Which of these would have been impossible before the World War in (a) point of fact, (b) casual acceptance of changing social standards? Which of them reflect contemporary conditions? Which are more nearly timeless or universal in subject matter?

Among recent developments is a renascence of the short short-story. Prizes have been awarded (1924-1929) to "Him and Her," by Katharine Brush; "Bridal Pond," by Zona Gale; "The Scarlet Woman," by Louis Bromfield; "Command," by A. R. Wetjen; "Papago Wedding," by Mary Austin; "Rachel and Her Children," by Frances Newman. Study these stories for the way each author focused the theme.

Criticism of the short story is in its infancy, yet two annual volumes frequently and independently select one, two, or three stories for inclusion in a volume of fifteen to twenty stories, out of 2,000 to 3,000 published. For example, in 1926 Arthur Huff Fauset's "Symphonesque" appeared in "O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories" and in Edward J. O'Brien's "Best Short Stories." Other stories reprinted in each of these annual volumes are:

Floyd Dell's "Phantom Adventure," (O. H. M. A. P. S., 1924; B. S. S., 1923**); Margaret Leech's "Manicure" (both annuals, 1929); Lyle Saxon's "Cane River" (O. H. M. A. P. S., 1926; B. S. S., 1927**).

In 1927 two stories receiving prizes from the Memorial commission were Roark Bradford's "Child of God," and Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers." Both were reprinted in O'Brien's collection. What characteristics of these stories led to their inclusion by both editors?

** There is a difference in dates because the annuals begin with different months for the "year."

(*For volumes in which short-stories mentioned in this book are to be found, please consult Bibliography II, p.* 324).

20 *January*, 1930. *B. C. W.*

CHAPTER II

THE INCEPTION OF THE STORY

Three stages of story making; logical beginnings; suggestions for treatment of situation; character as a starting point; place as the germ; importance of situation or incident; practical value of this exercise; the germinating process; avoidance of the trivial and hackneyed; value of the news column; method of using it; testimony of short story writers: Henry James, Theodore Dreiser, Barry Benefield, Frederick Stuart Greene, Anton Chekov, Struthers Burt; Gertrude Atherton, Thomas Beer, Katharine Holland Brown; Lawrence Perry, Sherwood Anderson, Katherine Mansfield; Guy de Maupassant, Rudyard Kipling, Irvin S. Cobb; Brander Matthews, H. C. Bunner, Booth Tarkington, Conan Doyle, Donn Byrne, Kathleen Norris, Frances Noyes Hart; two classes of story writer; Algernon Blackwood; Eleanor Hallowell Abbott.

"THE short-story is a prose narrative artistically presenting characters in a struggle or complication."

How shall one set about its production? Some authors cannot retrace the genesis of their narratives; seemingly, they have only to obey an inner voice which commands, "Write!" Others know every phase of the process, a process on occasion painful. Poe, who declared that he could recover all the steps by which he arrived at a finished poem, *a fortiori* constructed his stories from ground plan to roof tree, keenly aware of every contribution to the finished structure. Chekhov, who wrote in 1886, "I don't remember a single story over which I have spent more than twenty-four hours," also wrote two

years later, "If one denies that creative work involves problems and purposes, one must admit that an artist creates without premeditation or intention, in a state of aberration; therefore, if an author boasted to me of having written a novel without a preconceived design, under a sudden inspiration, I should call him mad.[1]

If, then, we reduce short-story making to its important stages, we have the initial step of capturing the story, the second of elaborating plot, and the third of developing the narrative. Since the main elements of narrative are action and character, the logical bases of narrative are people, occurrences or events, and situations. The writer who has learned his craft usually finds his starting point in character; the student well may follow the experienced writer's example. But he should beware of stopping at a mere sketch. Likewise if he begins with occurrences, he should not be content with the presentation of an even flowing series of events. He needs first of all to recognise and search for situation. By situation, I mean climax or crisis for some character, a climax which suggests dramatic values. Now, almost any clear-minded writer can conceive or devise an interesting situation; but he may experience difficulty in so treating it as to strengthen its significance, and throw its salient features into high light. As a fact, for the beginner the process is simple, consisting primarily in the application of question and answer. The value of the answers to these self-propounded questions will determine, so far as rough material is concerned, the worth of the final product. Suppose, for example, the situation is that of a dead body in a ceiling, "How did

[1] Letters of Anton Chekhov. Translated by Constance Garnett. Macmillan Company, New York, 1920. Pages 45 and 100.

it happen to be there?" "Who killed the person or animal?" "Why?" "Was it a murder?" "Where is the murderer?" Such queries should precede the determination of the situation as a *terminus ad quem* or a *terminus ab quo*. The writer who thinks tritely and without rejection will probably recall the brindle cat, which happened to fall upon the poisoned cheese destined for the mouse. It is doubtful that he would create from the germ a story worth reading. But Kipling put a dead cat in a ceiling for other and entirely effective reasons, as all "Stalky" readers know. Again, if to the question, "Where is the murderer?" the writer gives himself the answer, "On the premises" he has suggested already the possibility of a thrilling moment. Suppose he thinks of a thief entrapped in a room with a dead body, and so made to appear as the murderer. He will ask himself further, "How was the thief entrapped?" "Who really did the killing?" "How will the trapped one attempt to free himself?" "What will be the outcome of the struggle?"[2]

This brief exercise has dealt with the physiological or physical situation. Just as well, the situation may first present itself as psychological. For example, a person tells falsehood after falsehood. "Why?" "To whom?" "What are the falsehoods?" "What is the result of telling them?" The average mind, again, thinks of a too commonplace concrete instance: the small girl tells her mother falsehoods because she does not wish to be punished after wrong-doing. But Alice Brown takes the

[2] "The Harper Prize Short Stories," 1925, published eight years after the passage above was first published, contains "The Hands of the Enemy," by Charles Caldwell Dobie, a story which, by coincidence, illustrates the situation offered.

case of an habitually honest woman, goaded to a series of petty deceptions. The reader finds the reason adequate, the result satisfactory, in the finally developed story, "A Day Off." Sherwood Anderson's "I Want to Know Why" grows from a sixteen year old boy's seeing a man kiss a woman. This situation, common as day, outworn through anecdotes of sister and sister's friend and sister's brother, becomes a novel disturbing climax for Anderson's adolescent. If this particular woman had not been what she was, if the man had been what the narrator thought he was, there would have been no recountal of events ending, "What did he do it for?" Illustrations might be multiplied superfluously to establish the obvious. Whatever the situation, comic or tragic, physical or psychological, this business of question and answer will reveal to the writer his fertility or lack of fertility; his dependence on the commonplace or his recognition of the necessity to get away from the commonplace; it will teach him resourcefulness, or prove to him that he altogether lacks ingenuity and would therefore better give up story writing before he begins.

The student who is determined to write stories, however, should pause here to devise at least a dozen situations for testing his inventivenes If he has not native originality this is the first point in his training where he may set about acquiring it.

It was observed above that the character makes a good starting point, and further that danger lies in developing merely a character sketch. To avoid this side-switching upon another track than that of the short-story, the writer should first of all place his character in a situation. An author who declares, "My characters spin out their own

destiny," in effect says only that the characters are placed in situations which are spun out as indicated above. One wishes, for example, to write about a braggart. "In what situation would he play a braggart's part?" "What character would offset him?" "What struggle can I invent between the boaster and his foil?" "Whom will the reader wish to see victorious?" Another would exploit a self-effacing woman. "What character will deepen that for contrast, or one whose vanity is great?" "How shall I place them against each other to advantage?" "Will it be more like life if I discard the perhaps too mechanically conceived opposing trait?"

Since action and character presuppose place, the locale may be the first element in the situation. "Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck." This often quoted dictum of Stevenson's, generalised, means that certain places are fit for certain happenings. If to this setting, then, is given the fitting occurrence, the process of harmonising details has already begun. Since locale is inseparable from atmosphere, the author's feeling induced by the place will be the origin of that atmosphere which finally bathes the finished story in its intangible yet powerful presence. Stevenson's "The Merry Men" had its origin in the feelings excited by certain islands off the West Coast of Scotland.

Apart from these obvious starting points, others which offer themselves may be treated in a similar manner. If the author wishes to illustrate a thesis, he must find his situation to serve as the medium for his exposition or argument. O. Henry's "A Municipal Report" grew from

Frank Norris's statement that there are just three big cities in the United States that are story cities: New York, New Orleans, and San Francisco. He is a rash one, retorts O. Henry, who will say, "In this town there can be no romance . . ." and demolishes the Californian's thesis by using Nashville as locale for a romantic story. A facial expression may be sufficient. Henry James has declared it is an incident for a woman to stand with her hand resting on a table and look out at you in a certain way. A single act, though slight in itself, may serve the more objective writer. As some one has said, O. Henry would wish to know what the Henry James lady ordered from the menu. A phrase may serve to arouse the creative processes, as "the stout gentleman" served Washington Irving for one of his most delightful sketches. An idea or abstract concept may prove stimulating; a dream may be utilized. Chekhov combined these in "The Black Monk," which he says he wrote through cool reflection. "I simply had a desire to describe megalomania. The monk floating across the country was a dream." Anything in the physical world or mental world has possible value as starting point if, by the laws of correlation and evolution, it leads to an acceptable chain of ideas, concrete and entertaining. To catch the suitable suggestions, to hold them fast and to reject the unsuitable, is not always easy. But the clever situation, the suitable incident, eventually must be employed. "The desire for knowledge, I had almost added the desire for meat, is not more deeply seated than this demand for fit and striking incident," Stevenson aptly says in "A Gossip on Romance." Given the character of Robinson Crusoe, what would you think of him without his situation?

These are elementary methods. But students who earnestly desire to write stories, and who have a gift for narrative, frequently need to become acquainted with the theory of origins. One occasionally hears the advice to young writers, "Let your thought germinate." Germination presupposes rain and sun and perhaps a friendly breeze, if the seed and the earth unite to produce. Otherwise a dead seed in hard soil is the end of the sowing. The urging into growth of a story is a natural process, not more mechanical than the urging of the seed into the full grown plant. If a man sets a trap to catch sunbeams, and if he nurses his seedlings out of season, he is using mechanical means to aid nature. Without pursuing the analogy too far, we may observe that the forced germ—which is the antithesis of the non-developing germ—may result in a mere exotic product. Finally, I quote from "A Humble Remonstrance" for emphasising the point that elementary methods are necessary for the student who is training in narrative: "The young writer will not so much be helped by genial pictures of what an art may aspire to at its highest, as by a true picture of what it must be at its lowest terms." The purpose of this volume is to help constructively and from the beginning.

In working with the germinal idea, shun triviality. A story may be developed through excellent reasoning to insignificant effect. Just what may prove too trivial depends to some extent upon treatment; humorous purpose may find in triviality an asset, whereas a serious one will find it a liability. If the young writer tries to create tragedy out of a lover's discovery that his inamorata has a false tooth, he will produce unintentional comedy; but

realism may call into play the dentist's gory tools, as Chekhov exemplifies in "A Gentleman Friend." Again, a symbolic purpose may requisition toothache: Andreyev's "On the Day of the Crucifixion," in which Ben-Tovit's aching molar blinded him to the agony on the Cross, illustrates that all values are relative. "Nothing is so small or nasty," says Julian Street, in recalling the origin of "The Bird of Serbia," "that it cannot be made to serve an autocratic ruler in carrying out his designs." Taking as symbol for smallness and nastiness the louse, he set out to prove that lice could serve the autocrat who wished to start a war. Katherine Mansfield noted in her journal (1918) some thoughts about a fly floundering in a jug of milk. Four years later she wrote "The Fly," embodying a specific human case to illustrate the cruelty of the Great Boss. A. E. Coppard's "Arabesque: The Mouse" seems to say, "Men, like mice, are trapped."

Have nothing to do with the outworn. The young writer who has not read comprehensively will find that striking situations appeal to him as they have appealed to his literary ancestors. If he hears about a contrivance for crushing to death a person who lies sleeping, he should know that Wilkie Collins used such a contrivance in "A Mysterious Bed," and that the genius of a Conrad was necessary to improve upon the older story, as Conrad surpassed it in "The Inn of the Two Witches." A line drawn so as to cut a room in half has been employed repeatedly as a story idea. Many years ago the *Youth's Companion* ran a serial entitled "Andrew Hapnell's Fortune, Or, Biding His Time." The chalk lines were there. "Told in the Poorhouse," and "Joint Owners in Spain," by Alice Brown, more recently embody them. Not long

ago a student came across this sentence in "Edinburgh Notes": "A chalk-line drawn upon the floor separated their two domains; it bisected the doorway and the fireplace, so that each could go out and in and do her cooking without violating the territory of the other." Thinking the situation novel, she constructed upon it a story superior, in some respects, to the prototypes; but if she had been aware she was repeating, she would not have done so, for the story proved unsalable because those chalk lines had been drawn too often across the pages of fiction.

At the outset, rely, rather, upon your observation and experience. Try to grasp the truth that you are you, and that your observation and experience are not identical with those of any other person on earth. The life of every man, woman and child should be full enough of incident to give origin to volumes of stories. No one should lack nowadays new starting points. Some writers will work best, at the outset, with material that is far enough away to lend perspective and fire the imagination. Ultimately, they will catch the significance of the truth that fiction is a reflection of life, and will rely upon the near and known for their sources.

In the earlier attempts at story production, no author need despise the columns of the newspaper. Adaptation of foreign material affords in itself a valuable training in strengthening the powers of selection and rejection. Does the item you have chosen happen to exploit a person or persons whose type you know and can handle? Or must your imagination do the work of actual knowledge? Is the nationality one whose idiom you can represent? Does the setting fit the character and the action? Or must you do the work of harmonising, by changing locale

to fit character? How much time will the action require? Is a good struggle implied, or must you invent one? Has the item sufficient novelty? Is the fact too bizarre for the representative character of fiction? Such a series of questions will demolish the item as a starting point or will determine its availability for the writer who is considering it.

Of recent years story tellers have let the laity into the secrets of their creative processes. Few are willing or able to tell how the parts of the plot linked themselves together; but most of them recall the germinal idea. Of the earlier writers, Hawthorne is an instance. His "American Note-Books," familiar to most readers, need no citation here, but the student unacquainted with Hawthorne's practice will do well to consult them. Henry James, who recorded in his "Prefaces"[3] facts about the growth of his stories, revealed that his was a fertile mind for the reception of germs that fell out in conversation. He says about the starting point of "The Tree of Knowledge": "I recover exceptionally the sense of the grain of suggestion, the tiny air-blown particle. In presence of a small interesting example of a young artist long dead, and whom I had yet briefly seen and was to remember with kindness, a friend had made, thanks to a still greater personal knowledge of him and his quasi-conspicuous father, one of those brief remarks that the dramatist feels as fertilising. 'And then,' the lady had said in allusion to certain troubled first steps of the young man's career, to complications of consciousness that had made his early death perhaps less strange and less lamentable, even though superficially more tragic, 'and then he

[3] Collected Works, Copyright, 1909, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

had found his father out artistically, having grown up in so happy a personal relation with him only to feel, at last, quite awfully, that he didn't and couldn't believe in him.' That fell on one's ears, of course, only to prompt the inward cry, 'How can there not possibly be all sorts of good things in it?'" Again, with reference to the starting point of "The Author of Beltraffio," he remarks, "It had been said of an eminent author . . . 'his wife objects intensely to what he writes. She can't bear it, and that naturally creates a tension.' Here had come the air-blown grain which, lodged in a handful of kindly earth, was to produce the story of Mark Ambient."

At the extreme from Henry James, Thomas Hardy relied upon the concrete. The country he knew so well, the Wessex of his novels and stories, provided him with starting points of incident, character, and mood. His name is forever identified with the locality; some of his minor characters he drew from life; the characteristics of his men and women invariably are those of the place (however individual the creation of the man or woman in a given instance), or those of the place modified through travel or foreign residence. Actual incidents occasionally are transferred to his pages; for example, two German soldiers were shot for desertion, on Bincombe Down: this tragedy was used in "The Melancholy Hussar," the real names of the deserters being given. . . . "But," protests the young writer, "Henry James is dead and Thomas Hardy died in 1928 at the age of eighty-something. I'd like to know whether their ways are used today." In the following paragraphs are summarized a few modern instances.

The incident underlies Theodore Dreiser's "The Lost

Phoebe" (a bit about an insane man in Missouri); Barry Benefield's "Miss Willett" (a show window exhibit on a street in New York where a negro woman of a most evil expression used to demonstrate a folding bed); Frederick Stuart Greene's "The Cat of the Cane-Brake" (a severed rattlesnake head fastened itself to the leg of a man in camp). "The story ordinarily comes to me," says Struthers Burt, "as an incident or theme."

Character and situation underlie Gertrude Atherton's "The Sacrificial Altar": . . . "I set out to draw a born artist hampered by certain disabilities, one of these being a disinclination for life and utter absence of the love instinct. . . ." A phase of character set Thomas Beer to work on "Onnie." The genesis of the tale, he says, "was the desire to record the dialect of one Patrick Qualey, a gardener, now extinct." Generalized character is the source of the boy "Buster" in Katharine Holland Brown's story of this title: "He isn't the portrait of any real flesh-and-blood boy. But he tries to be the composite portrait of the fourteen-year-olds that we know, and most of us own by ties of blood. . . ." She further had in mind "the probably futile attempt to convince the average parent that the abysmal differences between the Busters of today and their own generation are not so many conclusive proofs that Buster and his tribe are essentially inferior." Lawrence Perry's "A Certain Rich Man—" grew from a remark made by a young man at dinner that he would willingly give his life if through that sacrifice he could bring an end to the war (the story was published 1917) . . . "the story in the situation lay in having the man make good." The next difficulty lay in answering the question, "In what way could he make good?" Sher-

wood Anderson has not stated the idea on which "I Want to Know Why" is founded; but to any reader of his autobiographic "A Story Teller's Story" the following passage is sufficient declaration: " 'I knew a man once, Jake Freer it was, from over near Muncie, Indiana, who could get more out of a bum horse in a hard race than any man you ever set your eyes on and he was the darndest woman-chaser in ten states.' " Finally, Katherine Mansfield, whose work seems not only to J. Middleton Murry to be "of a finer and purer kind than that of her contemporaries . . . more spontaneous, more vivid, more delicate and more beautiful," set down in her journal (October 27, 1921): "N. Z. *At Karori.* The little lamp. I seen it. And then they were silent." New Zealand was to be the setting; *At Karori,* the title, was changed to "The Doll's House," the inimitable ending of which is the emergence of the idea in finished form:

> "I seen the little lamp," she said, softly.
> Then both were silent once more.

Of authors who illustrate the reporting instinct in choice of ideas, De Maupassant, Kipling and Irvin S. Cobb will serve to represent France, India and England, and America, respectively. In "Afloat," De Maupassant devotes a number of pages to the description of an old couple of whom he had heard and whom he twice visited. Part of what he there narrates is produced in the story entitled "Happiness."[4] Kipling's experiences and observations in India account for his first stories; and for the later "The Eyes of Asia," which requisitions, also,

[4] He was too wise to mar his art by the addition of facts which, gathered at a second visit, turn the beauty of the real story into bitter irony.

familiarity with the battlefields of France. Irvin S. Cobb, whose nose for news is good but not better than his memory, said when he was writing "The County Trot": "Why, I can close my eyes and see the knotholes that were in the fence around that fairground." His later stories of the Tennessee River reveal observation and—if he has not revisited the scenes of late—accurate retention of details. Growth in journalism is responsible for better fiction of this sort as well as for better reports of fact stories. Not infrequently it is difficult to say where fact leaves off and fancy begins; for example, in "The Almost Perfect Crime," a hybrid by S. S. Van Dine, whose fictionizing powers are known to all detective story readers. Chekhov occasionally illustrates the reporter's habits; see, for instance, his "Cold Blood," and compare it with his letter of April 2, 1887, to his sister, in which he says: "We talked of railways. The inspector told us how the Sevastopol railway stole three hundred carriages from the Azov line and painted them its own colour."

Among writers who have used the news column as stimulus to the imagination are Brander Matthews ("The Twinkling of an Eye"); H. C. Bunner ("A Letter and a Paragraph"); Booth Tarkington ("Cherry"), and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (who found in the Agony Column of the *Times* a starting point for more than one story). Kathleen Norris's "Rising Water" was suggested by a news clipping, the substance of which was transferred from Mississippi to California. This author knows California, and by the shift gave herself a locale with which she was familiar.

Of "The Wake" Donn Byrne said, "I wished to write

a story of an Irish wake which was neither sordid nor indelicately funny." Having that desire, he chose in harmony with his theme Ulster, North Ireland, for his setting. A dream fortuitously proved fertilizing in the mind of Frances Noyes Hart, for of "Contact!" she writes: . . . "I dreamed I was the girl standing in the storm, waiting for the lost airplane to bring back her dead lover. The *sound* was that I brought back from my dream. The form, character, and details of the story I invented." Observe, however, that this white magic play with a dream is vastly different from the stupid retelling of dream visions recalled in the light of day.

Current story writers may be grouped, as of old, in two general classes. In the one are those who fictionize from the reporting writer's urge: Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers" apparently concerns itself with the immediate story, whatever implications may have been lurking in the author's brain when he reported; the same thing is true of W. R. Burnett's "Round Trip"[5] and "Dressing-Up,"[6] however far afield his thoughts roamed from these significant instances of life in Toledo and Chicago, A.D., 1929. In the other group are those who fictionize by using the concrete for the embodiment of an abstract idea. Wilbur Daniel Steele appears to have chosen the characters and events in "The Silver Sword" to illustrate the ultimate surrender of the old South to the new North; he has found in "Pioneers" the right external symbols for revealing the change, downfall and final destruction of the older American civilization before the hordes of invading European peasants. At their best, these two

[5] *Harper's Magazine,* August, 1929.
[6] *Harper's Magazine,* November, 1929.

groups meet; certain writers illustrate the meeting—Sherwood Anderson, notably, whose reporting brain is not less busy than his thought processes, in such stories as "I'm a Fool," and "I Want to Know Why," and "Alice," and "Death in the Woods."

Exemplifying the art of the story writer who works, not logically but emotionally, the following letter from Algernon Blackwood may be quoted:

. . . "I can only say that these [short-stories] come to me of their own accord, or not at all; I never can sit down and write one to order. An emotion, clothing itself instantly in dramatic incident, is the secret probably. But to say this is not, I know, to explain it. The atmosphere certainly comes from *feeling* it. I cannot work up atmosphere artificially. Unless I feel it myself, it is not in the story . . .

"As so many of my stories flash upon me with suddenness, come to me first in the form of dreams, or show themselves in that state of half-consciousness when one lies between sleeping and full waking, I may not be far wrong in guessing that it is the subconsciousness that first prepares them. Then some commonplace incident of the day taps this subconscious content—and the idea in story form emerges. I am the more inclined to think this is the case, inasmuch as I can never say, 'Now I'll sit down and write a story about this or that.' I cannot deliberately manufacture one. And, often enough, the story emerges by the wrong end, upside down, so to speak. I get the end before I know the beginning: as if, though complete already in the subconscious mind, a loose end poked up first. But the rest invariably follows, is pulled out. If not, and if it fails me, hides again

or disappears, I stop. For I never can *invent* the rest of it. . . .

"I will give you a short example. The idea came to me of a young man, just about to leave for Egypt, going to a clairvoyant to please the girl he was engaged to. It did not interest him, at all; he just went. And the clairvoyant said, 'You will drown, but you will not know you drown.' It was this sentence that came to me first. I 'felt' a complete story behind it, though I did not know what it was going to be, much less in what way the curious sentence could justify itself. If I thought about it, I should lose it. I sat down and wrote therefore at once. It was a short story for the *Westminster Gazette,* published April 18, 1914.[7] It ran on smoothly of its own accord, but until the very end I did not consciously know how that sentence would come in and make the climax. The girl, being alarmed, makes him promise to be careful of water; but in Egypt there is no water except the Nile. He avoids the Nile! The prophecy is entirely forgotten. A year later, on the eve of sailing home to marry, he is thrown from his horse in the desert, injured; the horse bolts, and he is lost for twenty-four hours, suffers from heat and thirst, and becomes ultimately a little delirious. A search party, he knows, will come eventually. He lies upon a mound of sand so as to be visible. He becomes unconscious. At last the party comes. Though unconscious, his nerves note the sound of hoofs and automatically make the muscles twitch. The body moves—just enough to lose its balance on the steep mound of sand. It rolls slowly down the side—into a

[7]"By Water" is included in Mr. Glackwood's Day and Night Stories, E. P. Dutton, 1917.

pool of water, one of those rare pools the Bedouins keep jealously to themselves. But, being unconscious, he does not know he rolls, does not know he sinks. He drowns —but does not know he drowns. . . ."[8]

It is undoubtedly true that many an author has been unconsciously guided to produce excellent results. But the student without the genius that is self-guiding will best follow the example of those who plan consciously from a definite beginning.

Eleanor Hallowell Abbott says in "The Mean Little Town":

"First of all, somewhere on the dingy street or in the crowded cars or at a bright coloured party, Fate fairly bumps you into an amazing incident. This amazing incident, in turn, caroms you off most abruptly against a new idea. Embarrassed by your intrusion into the amazing incident, bruised by your impact with the new idea, half-laughing, half-crying, you find yourself all keyed up to such a great state of emotional disturbance that you feel just literally impelled to snatch up the amazing incident and shake it, and deliver it over in toto to the first sympathetic person you meet.

"Then your cool brain that is always so annoyingly strict with you joggles its inky fingers right in your face and says:

" 'No, no! You mustn't touch that amazing incident, because amazing incidents always and invariably belong to other people—and must not under any circumstances be given away! But you can have this new idea if you want to, because new ideas are wild things and there's not even a game law on them. All I have to know,' warns

[8]Letter to one of my students, the late Wilhelmina Thoma, with privilege of publication.

your brain, 'is that you really and truly want this new idea.'

" 'Why, of course, I want it!' you retort a trifle snappily, 'Why, I haven't had a new idea since a week ago, Sunday!"

" 'Oh, very well, then,' smiles your calm brain, 'Oh, very well, then, hand me over immediately all your emotional interest in your amazing incident—your shock, your surprise, your anger, your joy, your approval, your contempt—any feeling at all as long as it honestly does constitute a big feeling—and I will take a little paper and a little ink and a few punctuation marks and vitalise them into a brand new incident for your new idea to live in, so that you can bring that new idea boldly home and raise it honourably as your own, and no inquisitive person will even remotely suspect that you adopted it from your brother Dick's romance with the Cuban school-teacher, or from the confession the conductor made to you the day your car stalled in the subway, or from the great bunch of white lilacs that the Italian fruit pedlar sends your mother every thirteenth of January.'

"So out of the accident of a moment, the anger of a second, the rapture of an instant, your brain proceeds then and there, very laboriously, very painstakingly, through days and weeks and months perhaps of sleeplessness and worry and reluctantly sacrificed pleasures, to create for you what it promised you—a brand new incident for your new idea to live and flourish in.

"Behold, then—the story!"

After Mrs. Abbott has told the story of a young man who was kept at home in the country through devotion to his aged grandfather, she ends by divulging her starting point:

"One morning last summer I saw a great gorgeous yellow butterfly, so great, so gorgeous, so altogether miraculous that it almost broke my heart to think it could live only a day.

" 'But short as a day may seem to you, a day is a full life-time to the butterfly,' argued the philosophical person close beside me.

" 'Oh yes, I know that. But this particular day, you see, was a rainy day. And the yellow butterfly's wings were so bedraggled with the weather—all around him—that he never got any chance at all to fly.' "

No short-story author has hinted more suggestively of the germinating process.

The student, however, who needs explicit help will find it more definitely in the succeeding chapters.

Exercises for Chapter II

Have you read stories emphasising any of the following situations, or similar situations? What are they? If you find that one of the situations has value for you as a starting point, write a story about it.

A novice rides a dangerous horse.

An old man is turned out after long service.

A criminal is married to one who believes him (her) innocent.

A child plays with an imaginary playmate.

An old lady desires to be a church sexton.

A man achieves success through failure.

A small happening obscures a great event.

A trifle assumes tremendous importance.

An inanimate object shows anthropomorphic characteristics.

A person presumably dead appears.

A bridegroom fails to appear.

A poor person imitates one of wealth.

One destroys a garden, (b) a painting, (c) a letter.

One is murdered where he had meant to murder another.

A person masks his features with a veil.

A civilised Indian reverts to type.

A servant kills his master.

One makes three wishes on a charm.

A man is obsessed by the idea that he is set apart for great things.

Two meet (a) who have failed, (b) who have succeeded, (c) one of whom has failed.

An American girl breaks her engagement with a nobleman.

One doomed comforts another.

A man scorns the flag of his country.

Two feudists meet at a dancing party.

A man transfers his clothing to another (tragic purpose, comic purpose).

A man (woman, child) (a) falls overboard a vessel, (b) is rescued.

Women in a race win against men contestants.

Hidden treasure is found.

One pushes another from a cliff.

A dog is killed in a fight (sympathy with victor, sympathy with defeated).

A house and its occupants are engulfed.

A wife fails to recognise the essential greatness of her husband.

A person driven by fear assumes bravery.

(a) An innocent man is condemned, (b) a guilty man is acquitted.

An American girl meets a French girl at (a) tennis, (b) luncheon, (c) a dance.

Read Chekhov's "Polinka" for a contrast between the apparent and the real situations.

Read A. E. Coppard's "Big Game," and see whether you can determine how the dream is related to the rest of the story in so far as the author's creative processes were concerned.

Read Ray Coryton Hutchinson's "Every Twenty Years," which weaves a dream into the warp and woof of the tale.

A. E. Coppard excels in the development of interesting situations. Read "Broadsheet Ballad" for his use of one in which two sisters are betrayed by the same man. Read "Alas, Poor Bollington," for his use of one in which a man and his wife run away from each other.

Find a concrete situation, or series of situations, to illustrate the following theses:

(a) Beauty is more than skin deep.

(b) Not only once comes to every man a moment for decision.

(c) Gratitude works not for the donor, but for the receiver.

(d) Harm may be accomplished through best intentions.

"Death gathers men little by little, he knows what he is about. One might write a play: an old chemist invents the elixir of life—take fifteen drops and you live for ever; but he breaks the phial from terror, lest such carrion as himself and his wife might live for ever."—Letters of Chekhov, Translated by Constance Garnett, The Macmillan Co., 1920.

Read Hawthorne's "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," a short story based on a kindred idea.

Ten situations offered above were quoted (from the first edition of this work) by the playwright Percival Wilde in "The Craftsmanship of the One-Act Play,"[9] and two of them were chosen for examination by him. For his entire experimentation the student is referred to pages 74 to 88 of the volume mentioned. His notes on one situation I am permitted to set down here:

" 'A servant kills his master.' This, on the face of it, is excellent dramatic material. It is richly suggestive; it prompts immediate questions, hence a play may easily begin thus. It will be seen to possess every element of a solution, hence a group of plays may end thus. Still more, it is an admirable example of brilliant focus, of flux, of that plastic moment in which positions may be reversed and destinies turned about, and may quite as easily become the crisis of another group of plays.

Here, at once, we have three broad avenues leading from the situation to the play. Each avenue, too, through a hundred different bypaths, leads to innumerable plays. 'Servant'; 'master': these terms are fruitful when one ponders them a little. Many themes may be imbedded in the complex relationships which they make possible. In 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' do not servant and master reside in the same body? Is it not so too in 'The Picture of Dorian Gray'? And in Charles Esquier's dramatization of Merimée's terrible story of 'Lokis'? And, if we let our thoughts wander to the fantastic, do we not find infinite material of a similar nature in the subject of witchcraft?

We need not stray so far afield. Every man has many servants and many masters within him. They are forever in combat. His character determines; his action expresses

[9] The Craftsmanship of the One-Act Play, by Percival Wilde, Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1923.

the result. And 'killing' itself need not be accompanied by an effusion of blood. It may be more difficult—and more dramatic—to kill a master whose very existence is kept a secret than to put to death an external physical adversary. Let a situation but swell into a theme, let one event but be considered in the light of all events, and the plays which may result are numberless."

Mr. Wilde's skilful playing with this situation may be taken to heart by the student of the short-story no less than by the student of the play.

CHAPTER III

PLOT: PRELIMINARIES

Inductive method; review of anecdote and Incident; definition of anecdote; class divisions; examples of typical anecdotes; structure; rules; relation to short-story; definition of Incident; distinctions between it and anecdote; illustration; analysis; relation to short-story; dividing line sometimes erased; unmistakable distinction between Incident and story of two lines of interest.

"The most important of the constitutive elements is the Plot, the organisation of the incidents of the story. . . . The Plot is the First Principle, and, as it were, the very Soul of Tragedy."—Aristotle's "The Art of Poetry."

After finding the story, after the characters and main action appear, the next step is that of constructing a plot. It is the purpose of this section to induct the student into the principles of plot making by a brief review of two simple narrative forms, the anecdote and the Incident. Each is built on a ground plan which has features in common with that of the short-story. The writer who is familiar with plot origins may pass on to the next chapter; but the novice who desires plot instruction from the beginning should linger here.

By anecdote, I mean the briefest form of narrative built according to a plan. The anecdote presents a trait of character, a situation for eliciting or displaying the trait, and a dramatic moment in which it appears. The dramatic moment is frequently termed the point, nub or snapper. Reduced to formula,

Trait + situation + dramatic moment = anecdote. The characteristic trait may be mentioned in the beginning or it may be held in reserve up to the dramatic moment. As Mark Twain comments,[1] any one may learn to tell this story with a point, typically French, as opposed to the more difficult and typically American humorous story. Yet every one recalls lamentable failure in making the point, failures resulting in unconscious humour such as Mark Twain describes. These failures arise usually from a disregard for structural principles. Before examining with reference to plan, the anecdotes offered below, the student should recall the various divisions of the type: there is the story which directs its barb against the professional class—the lawyer, the teacher, the physician; or against certain time-honoured relations—the mother-in-law, the hen-pecked husband; the story told at the expense of national traits—the shrewdness of the Scotch, the stolidity of the English; or personal traits, frankness, simplicity, absent-mindedness, cupidity and the like.

Now in the following examples, which are obviously typical, one pattern or plan serves for all:

1. Farmer Reed went to the house of his neighbour Farmer Norris to buy a bushel of corn. Mr. Norris was away, but Mrs. Norris undertook to oblige the would-be purchaser.

Having secured a peck measure, and led the way to the corn-crib, she filled the measure twice and emptied the contents into the bag. Then she began to tie it up.

"But wait!" remonstrated Farmer Reed, "it takes four pecks to make a bushel."

"Oh, does it?" Mrs. Norris asked languidly. "Such

[1] How to Tell a Story.

matters are entirely out of my province. You see, before I was married I always taught school."

2. When Mr. Hume began to be known in the world as a philosopher, Mr. White, a decent, rich merchant of London, said to him: I am surprised, Mr. Hume, that a man of your good sense should think of being a philosopher. Why *I* now took it into my head to be a philosopher for some time, but tired of it most confoundedly, and very soon gave it up."

"Pray, sir," said Mr. Hume, "in what branch of pholosophy did you employ your researches? What books did you read?"

"Books?" said Mr. White. "Nay, sir, I read no books, but I used to sit you whole forenoons a-yawning and poking the fire."—Boswell's "Johnson," Hill, III, 346.

3. Governor Bob Taylor was once taking luncheon when his servitor Sam appeared with the news that a delegation of important politicians was awaiting him below.

"Tell them that I'll be down in a minute, Sam," said the Governor.

"Sam," said Mrs. Taylor, "tell them that the Governor will be down in half an hour."

"Yassum," said Sam.

The Governor turned around impatiently and said, "Sam tell them I'll be down immediately."

"Tell them, Sam," said Mrs. Taylor, "that the Governor will be there in half an hour."

The Governor was outraged. "Sam," said he majestically, "do you know who the Governor of Tennessee is?"

"Yassuh; yassuh; yass 'ndeed, sah," said Sam, "I'll tell 'em you'll be down in half an hour, sah."

4. "When you had the measles, Mr. Archibald, you had them gey and ill; and I thought you were going to slip between my fingers," he said. "Well, your father was anxious. How did I know it? says you? Simply because I am a trained observer. The sign that I saw him make, ten thousand would have missed; and perhaps —*perhaps,* I say, because he's a hard man to judge of— but perhaps he never made another. A strange thing to consider! It was this. One day I came to him: 'Hermiston,' said I, 'there's a change.' He never said a word, just glowered at me (if ye'll pardon the phrase) like a wild beast. 'A change for the better,' said I. And I distinctly heard him take his breath."

The doctor left no opportunity for anti-climax; nodding his cocked hat (a piece of antiquity to which he clung) and repeating "distinctly" with raised eyebrows, he took his departure, and left Archie speechless in the street.[2]

5. Here is an example of audacious and ingenious resourcefulness. . . .

A baker's barrow was standing unattended in a side street when a shabby man, by his appearance hard up and evidently out of work, looking round and seeing no one about, lifted the lid and quickly abstracted two loaves. He had one in each hand just as the baker came out of a gateway close by.

The baker rushed up, and in a loud voice demanded what he was doing there.

The man calmly commenced weighing the loaves one against the other; then, turning to the baker said:

"I was just wondering whether your loaf was heavier than mine, as my baker gives short weight!"

"You put my loaf down and clear out of it."

[2] From Weir of Hermiston, by R. L. Stevenson, copyright, 1896, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

The man immediately dropped one back into the barrow, and with the exclamation, "All right, old chap, don't get nasty," made a rapid retreat with the other loaf.—*Strand Magazine.*

These stories all consist of a situation and a dramatic moment wherein is revealed the trait which may have been expressed previously or omitted. If in Number 1 the narrator had begun, "The following story illustrates the ignorance of teachers," he would have betrayed his point or weakened its effect; hence he omits the trait. Number 2 also wisely refrains from a statement to the effect that it will illustrate the popular opinion about philosophers. The double edge, moreover, cuts two ways, baring also the ignorance of the "decent, rich merchant." Number 3 dispenses with a remark which a bungler might have made that the Governor told the story as an instance of his being subject to his wife's authority. In Number 5, in the words, "Your father was anxious," Stevenson does not betray through the Doctor the specific evidence of anxiety, and is not therefore inartistic. That Archie stood "speechless in the street" proves the stunning force for him of the dramatic moment, "I distinctly heard him take his breath." Nor, for similar reason, is the climax of Number 5 blunted, though the prefixed statement is not necessary.

The chief rules for the anecdote writer are these: 1. State as economically as possible the situation; for if the situation is too much expanded or told at length the point may dwindle by comparison and seem trivial. In common parlance, the story will fall flat. 2. Hold the point in reserve, and if necessary the trait. 3. End

on the point. Such procedure employs the structural principles of suspense, proportion, and of climax with perhaps surprise; not in themselves forming plot, but distinctive characteristics of plot.

These elements suggest the kinship of the anecdote and the short-story, whose patterns are by no means the same. It is true that many short-stores are anecdotal.[3] O. Henry's "A Lickpenny Lover," "The Romance of a Busy Broker," and "A Comedy in Rubber" are anecdotes, farcical anecdotes, expanded. They are readable and enjoyable, but this fact has nothing to do with the genre to which they belong. "A Lickpenny Lover," for example, might be put into a form no longer than this:

The young man was imploring the young lady to be his own.

"Only say that you will be mine!" he cried, "I long to fly with you from the sordidness of the life you must lead; it would be bliss to introduce to you the pleasures of a world far from Billington's Department Store. We would row to the tune of the gondolier's song, would visit India and Japan, would ride in 'rikishas and toboggan over the Himalayas——"

She turned cold eyes upon him. "Can't you do better than Coney for a wedding trip?"

In general, do not use the longer form for conveying material amply accommodated by the briefer type. But study the composition of the anecdote and practise telling it with regard for the dramatic moment, which is not unlike, in place and function, the climax of the short-story.

[3] Henry James and others speak of the anecdote in a way not to be confused with the term here defined. Cf. "tale" above, page 3.

With respect to its plot, the Incident is more highly developed than the anecdote. By Incident (with a capital I), I mean not merely a happening, an occurrence, which may be at the basis of short-story, Incident, or even anecdote. By Incident I mean a brief narrative which has for its foundation a single line of action, usually recounting a chase, or the overcoming of an obstacle, or a mental struggle. The formula is

Inciting impulse + steps in action + climax + dénouement = Incident.

It necessarily involves an extent of time and frequently a change of place. The anecdote is typical; the Incident is unique. The anecdote is told primarily for exemplification of trait; the Incident for the action. It is true that the Incident may exhibit a trait as of courage or bravery in action; but whereas the anecdote would emphasise the bravery, the Incident celebrates the action directed by that bravery. The anecdote which is "essentially simple and single" may be represented by a point; the Incident requires a line. For the sake of clearer distinction, read this capitally told and representative Incident by F. Hopkinson Smith.

The narrator represents Plain Fin, his puntsman on the Thames, "a little, sawed-off, red-headed Irishman," as a raconteur of incidents wherein he often figured. He has just made the statement that he ought to have been a barrister. "I started as one." To the narrator's question, "When was that, Fin?" he replies:

"When I was a gossoon of twenty, sor—maybe eighteen —I'm fifty now, so it's far back enough, God knows. And

it all happened, too, not far from that old ink-bottle's place in Temple Bar. I was lookin' at it wan day last winter when I had a fare down there that I took up in old Bond Street. I did the sweepin' out and startin' fires. Wan day wan of the clerks got fired because he couldn't serve a writ on another barrister chap who owed a bill that me boss was tryin' to collect. Nobody could git into his rooms, try every way they could. He had nigh broke the head o' wan o' the young fellows in the office who tried it the day before. He niver come out, but had his grub sent him. This had been goin' on for a month. All kinds o' games had been put up on him and he beat 'em all.

" 'I'll do it,' I says, 'in a week's time or less.' The manager was goin' through the office and heard the laugh they give me. 'What's this?' he says, cross-like. 'Fin says he kin serve the writ,' the clerk says. 'I kin,' I says, startin' up, 'or I'll throw up me job.

" 'Give him the writ,' he says, 'and give him two days off. It kin do no harm for him to try.'

"Well, I found the street, and went up the stairs and read the name on the door and heard somebody walkin' around, and knew he was in. Then I lay around on the other side o' the street to see what I could pick up in the way o' the habits o' the rat. I knew he couldn't starve for a week at a time, and that something must be goin' in, and maybe I could follow up and git me foot in the door before he could close it; but I soon found that wouldn't work. Pretty soon a can o' milk come and went up in a backet that he let down from his window. As he leaned out I saw his head and it was a worse carrot than me own. Then along come a man with a bag o' coal on his back and a bit o' card in his hand with the coal-yard on it and the rat's name underneath, a lookin' up at the house and scratchin' his head as to where he was goin'.

"I crossed over and says, 'Who are ye lookin' for?' And he hands me the card. 'I'm his man,' I says, 'and I been waitin' for ye—me master's sick and don't want no noise and if ye make any I'll lose me place. I'll carry the bag up and dump it and bring ye the bag back and a shillin' for yer trouble. Wait here. Hold on,' I says; 'take me hat and let me have yours, for I don't git a good hat every day, and the bag's that dirty it'll spile it.'

" 'Go on,' he says; 'I've carried it all the way from the yard and me back's broke.' Well, I pulled his hat over me eyes and started up the stairs wid the bag on me shoulder. When I got to the fust landin' I run me hands over the bag' gettin' 'em good and black, then I smeared me face, and up I went another flight.

" 'Who's there?' he says, when I knocked.

" 'Coals,' I says.

" 'Where from?' he says.

"I told him the name on the card. He opened the door an inch and I could see a chain between the crack.

" 'Let me see ye face,' he says. I twisted it out from under the edge of the bag. 'All right,' he says, and he slipped back the chain and in I went, stoopin' down as if it weighed a ton.

" 'Where'll I put it?' I says.

" 'In the box,' he says, walkin' toward the grate. 'Have ye brought the bill?'

" 'I have,' I says, still keepin' me head down. 'It's in my side pocket. Pull it out, please, me hand's that dirty,' —and out come the writ!

"Ye ought to have seen his face when he read it. He made a jump for the door, but I got there fust and downstairs in a tumble, and fell in a heap at the foot with everything he could lay his hands on comin' after me—tongs, shovel, and poker.

"I got a raise of five bob when I went back and ten bob besides from the boss.

"I ought to have stayed at the law, sor; I'd be a magistrate by now a-sittin' on a sheepskin."[4]

Now in this account of an Irishman who directs his shrewdness to one end, the line the reader follows is that struck out by Fin, who makes his way past difficulties to the accomplishment of his purpose. The obstacles encountered are all in one path. First, what *is* the way? The coalboy's route presents itself. But how will Fin palm himself off as the coal carrier? He must look the part, and so he effects a convincing disguise. But after he delivers the coals, he has to serve the writ. Very well, he will submit it as the coal bill. He has overcome his difficulties and accomplished his purpose. But he must escape. The drop back from the height of interest (the serving of the writ) shows Fin in retreat down the stairs. This may be called with more than usual fitness, the falling action of the narrative. The satisfactory dénouement is Fin's reporting to headquarters and receiving the reward for his labours. The plot structure may be represented by the following diagram:

a, the beginning of the attempt; ab the way through difficulties to serving the writ; b the serving; bc the short downward action; c the dénouement.

Common to both the anecdote and the Incident is the climax or dramatic moment. Common to the Incident

[4] From The Under Dog, copyright, 1903, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

and the short-story are the foundational struggle and its successive phases. If the Incident material is of sufficient weight or magnitude, clearly the dividing line between the Incident and the short-story disappears. As an illustration consider the classic by Stevenson. Markheim kills a shopkeeper and subsequently gives himself up to the law. Here the single line of action begins with Markheim's intention to obtain the dealer's money. The difficulty, to get rid of the dealer at a time when the one servant was out, is overcome, and the treasure lies within his grasp. Now, the murderer's conscience awaking, his chain of reasoning leads to the end that he must lay down his life. "He confronted the maid on the threshold with something like a smile. 'You had better go for the police,' said he: 'I have killed your master.'" To give this weighty Incident the effect it deserved, to display its essential magnitude, Stevenson elaborated the moral struggle. By introducing the visitant, who adds to the interest of the narrative, the author at once dramatises this main struggle and makes use of fantasy in the best sense. The weight, the moral value, and the superb treatment elevate the Incident to the story standard. Likewise, "The Wall," by Harriet Welles, illustrates the single Incident which, by virtue of its weight and literary treatment, rises to the story level. The brief tragedy is the but momentary expression of a dormant racial inheritance.

Unmistakably, however, a distinction between the Incident and the short-story enters with the appearance of a subordinate line of interest. If the anecdote be represented by a point, and the Incident by a line, then the short-story may be represented by a line or an arrange-

ment of lines. An arrangement of lines will picture the plot of all short-stories not dependent merely on the struggle in the main line of interest.

Exercise for Chapter III

Read the following selection from Frederick Niven's "A Tale That is Told," and point out the Incident qualities. For what reasons may the selection be regarded as anecdotal? What is the struggle and who is successful?

[The father is speaking after a brief rhetorical grace.]

"Now, Mr. Smart," said my father, "I have here a selection to offer you. We are making you one of ourselves, you see. I have some cold mutton, mint sauce and a salad to accompany. There is also—well, I declare how beautifully it is arranged—a dish of macaroni."

"Perhaps Mr. Smart will begin with the macaroni," mother suggested. "There are hot plates for it."

"Ah, so there are. How remiss! Some *macaroni au gratin,* Mr. Smart?"

"Thank you," said Mr. Smart; and Mary Lennox, our dainty parlour-maid, inserted that beautiful hand of hers (that Dick's gaze used always to pounce upon as it came forward to remove or to set down a dish), took up the plate, and gliding round to Mr. Smart, put it before him.

"Darling?" inquired my father, after serving his guest. Mother nodded and was supplied with macaroni-cheese. In turn our names were announced and in turn we responded: "Please, father."

"Dear me," he said suddenly. "Dear me! Now I have not——"

Anxiously mother craned forward, looking beautifully worried.

"Have you none left for yourself?" she asked.

Tom blinked and blinked, then grinned broadly, and tried to catch Mary Lennox's eye, as always, to make her smile. Scarcely a change of expression was on her face, and what change there was, I thought, did not seem pro-Tom. She knew what he was doing, but if she was enough interested in us to have preferences she preferred my father to my eldest brother.

"Have mine, father," Florence and John offered together.

"No, thank you," said he. "And, you see, by taking no macaroni I do away with the handicapping that comes of serving you all. By the time the server comes to an end at this crowded table it is almost time to begin the round again. I renounce the macaroni and begin with" —— he helped himself on a cold plate—"mutton."

"You don't care very much for macaroni at any rate, do you, *pater?*" asked Tom, sitting very erect, munching away and grinning.

"Mm?" said father, and showed the under part of his chin to Tom. There was no reply. "No, no," he said, as one realising what has been said after a moment of uncertainty. "No, not very much, Tom. It is wonderful," he continued, turning to his guest and interviewer, "how the mouths are filled. The miracle of the loaves and fishes is in a sense re-enacted daily. Our daily life is a miracle," and he meant it.

Mr. Smart, who, I believe, was a very clever young journalist from the beginning of his career, bowed and smiled. If my father was being wise his face could suggest appreciation of wisdom; if my father was being jocular without profanity—appreciation of the grave jocularity.

"I am at any rate in a position now," said father, "to

speak of the cold mutton. I can recommend it. Will you have some?"

"There is ham and tongue," said mother. "And also some sweetbread pat——"

At the same moment father was saying: "Why, yes, of course. Ham and tongue. That's it, ham and tongue or cold mutton. I can speak for the mutton. Mutton, Mr. Smart? Good. It is delicious." Then round the table again went the inquiries: "Ham and tongue or mutton?"

We all chose mutton.

"Let me see," said father, "I feel hungry. The labourer, I think, is worthy of his hire, Mr. Smart. I must have some more to eat," and taking a fresh plate he helped himself to a sweetbread patty.

It was mother who first noticed that the young journalist had finished his cold meat. She nodded to father and murmured: "Mr. Smart, dear."

"Good gracious—how remiss I am!" father exclaimed. "Now please, do have some more. It is just a simple midday collation. Look here, I insist that you have a little ham and tongue. You must not ignore it."

"Perhaps Mr. Smart would like to try the sweetbreads," said mother with what I can best describe as a worried twist of her body as she drew erect and raised her head to look at the semicircle of ashets and platters at the table's service-end.

"Darling," replied my father, "Mr. Smart has a guid Scot's tongue in his heid. I am giving him his choice. If he wants a patty he will say so. Now, this ham and tongue is being neglected."

"Thank you," said Mr. Smart.

Tom did not wait to be asked; the moment father's raised chin, as he tilted his head to survey the state of our plates through his pince-nez, pointed at Tom, he said, with a note of challenge: "Sweetbreads, father."

"Na!" cried father. "For the fun of the thing we are going to return to ancient ways. You have spoken before being addressed, therefore I shall select for you. You will have ham and tongue. There, that is for Master Tom!"

Mother laughed nervously, and Mr. Smart pleasantly, and we all smiled like a silent chorus.

"John, you are ready, I see. What will you have?"

"I think by his face, *pater,*" said Dick, "that he would like a sweetbread patty."

"Richard! John is able to speak for himself—he's not a child. He is already cultivating the art of expression. Now, John, some more mutton? *Mens sana in corpore sano,* you know. Stick to the one thing if you don't want indigestion to interfere——"

"A little more mutton," said John.

"Aw!" Tom snorted, as one disgruntled.

"All again replenished?" asked father, glancing round the table—and then helped himself to more sweetbreads. Suddenly he noticed that I was finished. "Harold?" he said.

I thought that mother was in some trepidation lest Mr. Smart should notice how the sweetbread patties were being devoured. He did not look as if he had seen, but a good journalist would both see and look as if he had not. Still, good journalists do not sit in judgment; they take the world as they find it.

"Perhaps Harold would like a patty," said mother.

"*Place aux dames,*" said my father. "Florence may care for the last one.

Florence not only ate slowly but moved slowly, raised her fork slowly, cut with a pensive deliberation.

"No, thank you," she said, looking up.

"But you are not ready," father pointed out. "You may want it later. Have something else, Harold, my

boy, in case Florence . . . look, now that's very tasty, ham and tongue. Oh, dear me, Mr. Smart, you have no wine. A little light wine?" My plate went and returned as he spoke. "I think the French are very sensible in their . . ."

He fell into a causerie that lasted till Florence set down knife and fork close together, and Tom and I, who had been waiting for that, said in duet: "Florence, father!"

"Now a little more mutton," said father. "It is more sustaining than anything else on the table. I don't think ham and tongue is at all the diet for a young lady just ceased growing, do you, Mr. Smart?"

"How about the patty?" said Dick.

"Well, as a matter of fact——" Florence began, then paused. "I would rather have a little more mutton," she said.

"There!" cried father. "Now, mother? No more? Sure? Ah, well, then, I think it is a shame to leave that sweetbread patty. Seeing nobody else wants it . . ." and he lifted it from the dish on to his own plate.

Having eaten with great relish, and such a thoughtful manner as one may see on the face of wine or tea-taster, he tapped the empty dish with his fork.

"I am very partial to sweetbreads, Mr. Smart," he said.

"Oh, indeed?" replied Smart. "So am I."

"No! Why did you not tell me? Dear, dear. Darling do you think there is another patty in the kitchen? Might not Mary ask cook . . ."

"Please, no," said Mr. Smart. "Not to-day. I merely meant I understand the taste. I preferred the other. No, no."

"Quite certain? Oh, very well—don't trouble, Mary. I'm sorry you did not have one, though. They were wonderful! I confess—what, darling? Yes, yes, a little

more wine, Mr. Smart? Yes, I'm sorry no one cared even to help finish the sweetbread patties."[5]

[5] From A Tale That Is Told, (Chapter II), by Frederick Niven, George H. Doran Co., 1920. Reprinted by special permission of George H. Doran.

CHAPTER IV

PLOT: STRUGGLE AND COMPLICATION

1. *Struggle.* The struggle may be inherent in the situation or connoted by it; tentative classification of struggles; various ways of developing the struggle; the struggle between the natural and the supernatural in Greek literature; in short-stories of Hawthorne, Kipling, Henry James; quality of struggle a determinant of story quality.
2. *Complication.* The principle of complication; two lines of interest; analysis of stories for complication; synthesis of story for complication; special instances of complication; its value.

1. *Struggle*

HAVING reverted to the anecdote and the Incident for indirect aid, the student may begin direct study of the story plot by an examination of its salient feature, the struggle. The struggle may be inherent in the ganglionic centre, the situation chosen as a starting point for the narrative. For example, a cowboy chasing a buffalo, two soldiers fighting in No Man's Land, an adventurer attempting to set up a kingdom among a heathen tribe, an inventor trying to create a perpetual motion machine, all contain in embryo both situation and conflict. The situation, however, may only connote or suggest the conflict; a spy in prison is an example which suggests the preceding fight or succeeding attempt to escape, with perhaps a chase to recapture.

In the search for and selection of various possible conflicts, the student will find aid, first of all, in this tentative classification:

Types of Struggle

1. Beast *vs.* beast. "The Elephant's Child," Rudyard Kipling; "Buford," Millard Fillmore Williams; "Hero," Albert Payson Terhune.
2. Man *vs.* beast. "Bertran and Bimi," Rudyard Kipling; "A Passion in the Desert," H. de Balzac.
   (a) Man and beast *vs.* man. "Lady New Luck," Clinton Dangerfield; "The Elephant Remembers," Edison Marshall.
   (b) Man and beast *vs.* beast. "Moti Guj," Rudyard Kipling; "The Undefeated," Ernest Hemingway.
   (c) Man and beast *vs.* man and beast. "The Maltese Cat," Rudyard Kipling.
3. Man *vs.* natural forces. "He Man," Marjory Stoneman Douglas; "To Build a Fire," Jack London; "The Three God-Fathers," Peter B. Kyne; "The Trawler," James B. Connolly; "The Open Boat," Stephen Crane; "A Tale of Negative Gravity," Frank Stockton; "The Man Who Could Work Miracles," H. G. Wells.
4. Man *vs.* man. (a) Physical struggle. "Bloody Ground," Fiswoode Tarleton; "The Most Dangerous Game," Richard Connell; "The Killers," Ernest Hemingway; "Splendid with Swords," Wythe Williams; "The Taking of the Redoubt," Prosper Merimée; "The Attack on the Mill," Émile Zola; "An Occurrence up a Side Street," Irvin S. Cobb; "A Matter of Loyalty," Lawrence Perry.
   (b) Mental struggle, or conflict of wits. "Claustrophobia," Abbie Carter Goodloe; "The Doomdorf Mystery," and "Five Thousand Dollars Reward," Melville Davisson Post; "The Purloined Letter," Edgar Allan Poe; "The Money Box," W. W. Jacobs; the Sherlock Holmes Stories, Conan

Doyle; "Miss Hinch," Henry Sydnor Harrison; "The Hospital Nurse," Shane Leslie.

(c) Struggle of wills. "Sir Watson Tyler," Harvey O'Higgins; "A Sisterly Scheme," H. C. Bunner; "The Sire de Maletroit's Door," Robert Louis Stevenson; "The Revolt of 'Mother,'" Mary Wilkins Freeman; "The Persistent Little Fool," Fanny Kemble Johnson.

(d) Conflict between different generations. "Not Wanted," Jesse Lynch Williams; "Greater Love Hath No Man," F. Tennyson Jesse; "Each in His Generation," Struthers Burt.

(e) Conflict of elements in the same man. "William Wilson," Edgar Allan Poe; "Markheim," and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," Robert Louis Stevenson; "The Coward," Guy de Maupassant; "The New Dress," Virginia Woolf.

(f) Conflict between racial ideals. "Arab Stuff," and "Pioneers," Wilbur Daniel Steele.

(g) Struggle between knowledge and ignorance. "The Country of the Blind," H. G. Wells.

5. Man *vs.* fate. "An Imaginative Woman," and "A Waiting Supper," Thomas Hardy; "Elephants through the Country," Mary Johnston; "The Fly," Katherine Mansfield.
6. Man *vs.* supernatural forces. "Seaton's Aunt," Walter de la Mare; "They," "Wireless," and "The Phantom 'Rickshaw," Rudyard Kipling; "The Smell in the Library," Michael Arlen; "The Brute," Joseph Conrad.

The student should read carefully a number of the stories enumerated, once for the story, and again for

It is to be understood that these types frequently overlap.

the struggle only; he should study every phase, every detail of the prevailing conflict and all minor conflicts. He should then pause long enough to find and write down a dozen struggles, determining their varieties by his ability to handle them. He must also determine in each case just how he will develop the conflict. He may show one main struggle at the time the elements clash. For example Irvin S. Cobb's "An Occurrence up a Side Street," Kipling's "The Maltese Cat," and Ernest Hemingway's "The Undefeated" picture the forces contending in one scene. In all, accessory details are carefully subordinated. He may decide, in the second place, to pit his opposing forces, active or latent, against each other in a series of minor climax conflicts leading to a major climax. W. W. Jacobs's "The Money Box," Alice Brown's "A Day Off," and Richard Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game" illustrate this procedure. In Connell's story, for further instance, the chief character, Rainsford a hunter, has fallen overboard a yacht and has swum to Ship-Trap Island. There he finds a mansion occupied by one General Zaroff, a Cossack and hunter, with his servant Ivan. The General has found diversion of late, he gradually informs Rainsford, in the man-hunt. Rainsford is given the choice of being turned over to the dogs and Ivan or of becoming the General's quarry. He is equipped with a hunting knife, food, and allowed three hours start of the General, who follows with a pistol. The first climax in this man-chase shows Rainsford flattened to the limb of a tree, watching the General who has tracked him and whose eyes follow up the tree-trunk, stopping only just before they reach the limb. The General smiles and turns away. The second climax shows Rainsford waiting

behind a fallen log after his construction of a Malay man-catcher; the General steps on the trigger, but leaps back and escapes with only a shoulder wound. He calls out, "I shall be back!" In the third climax Rainsford is concealed behind a tree, hoping to catch the General in a pit lined with stakes. The General loses to this Burmese snare one of his best dogs, but again escapes and remarks that he is going home to rest. For the fourth climax, Rainsford prepares a trick used in Uganda; he bends a sapling and so attaches to it his hunting knife as to make a deadly weapon; he shins up a tree and waits. The knife fells Ivan; the General is still safe, and takes up the chase as Rainsford drops from the trees and heads for the ocean. The fifth climax (too good to be wholly convincing) reveals Rainsford in the General's room: after a hand to hand fight, Rainsford wins. Only in the last hundred words or so is it indicated that Rainsford emerged victorious from the hunt and only in the last line that he won the fight: "He had never slept in a better bed," Rainsford decided.

Minor climaxes may be summed up, rather than detailed, as in Conrad's "The Brute." The *Apse Family,* murderous vessel, kills man after man: at the head of the list, old Mr. Apse, the owner, (2) "Next comes the poor devil of a shipwright," (3) "The first time she flung the helmsman clean over the wheel, but as she didn't manage to kill him she had another try about three hours afterward." (4) "From the day she was launched she never let a year pass without murdering somebody." (5) "One of the boys . . . Nice-looking little fellow." In this story the peaks rise, to sharpen the interest, from the barely possible murder of the owner, through the definite

deaths laid to the vessel, and the generalized annual crimes, to the rounding out of the incident, numbered (5), that relates more fully the boy's death. And the chief climax is yet to come. "I heard a horrid, scraping sound, and then that anchor, tipping over, rose up like something alive; its great, rough iron arm caught Maggie round the waist, seemed to clasp her close with a dreadful hug, and flung itself with her over and down in a terrific clang of iron, followed by heavy ringing blows that shook the ship from stem to stern—because the ring-stopper held!"

Writers who use this method of developing the struggle must be careful to arrange the series in an ascending grade, must not introduce so many minor conflicts as to weary the reader before the grand climax, and must be careful to preserve the unity.

The writer may combine various types of struggle in the series without destroying the necessary unity. In Kipling's "Regulus," one scene exploits a clash between masters and students; another, a fight among the boys, and another, a dispute between the masters over the comparative values of the classics and the sciences. Conrad presents an engaging succession in "The Inn of the Two Witches." At its base is a chase or physical struggle. Byrne goes to seek his man, Tom. This search, in abeyance when Byrne arrives at the Inn, is superseded by the latent opposition between him and its occupants. After Byrne has gone to his room and locked himself in, he experiences a vivid feeling of Tom's nearness, and understands that Tom is trying to communicate with him. As is seen later, this is a brief struggle on the part of the supernatural to make connection with the physical. The

call which comes faintly, "Mr. Byrne, look out, sir!" in Tom's voice compels the traveller's eager efforts to hear more. But he receives no further communication. On searching the chamber, he finds his servant, in a tall wardrobe—dead. Here the chase with which the author set out has ended. But now the new conflict rises to a high pitch. In seeking to discover how Tom was killed, Byrne eventually learns the truth about the Bishop's bed. Tom has been done to death by its fiendish mechanism. Meantime, the fear that he must suffer Tom's fate battles with his own manhood. When he hears a knocking at the gate, he rushes down, all but insane, and flings himself upon the soldiers who, fortunately, are men of a rescuing party. In "The Gioconda Smile," Aldous Huxley presents not so much a sequence of struggles as a combination of them. First of all in importance, though it is not the first to impress itself upon the reader, is Mr. Hutton's final self-conflict; he loses and, in losing a moral victory, he finds himself in a situation that clinches the argument for his wife's murder. Miss Spence, of the Gioconda smile, struggles to get Mr. Hutton for herself; she loses and, in losing, damns herself. The analysis of such a plot properly comes under the heading of complication.

The young writer should not attempt this combination type of struggle series before he has succeeded in composing well unified examples of the preceding kind. The unity is larger, more inclusive, and requires for its presence a skilful manipulation of component elements; otherwise a scattering of the effect may destroy the short-story value.

In texts on the short-story, little has been said about the struggle between the natural and the supernatural.

Yet, from the earliest dramas of the Greeks, some of the noblest examples of literature have grown out of such conflict. In the first part of the Greek tragedy the individual may seemingly escape his Fate; but at the close Fate has circumvented him. Œdipus, exposed upon Mount Cithæron to die lest he fulfil the prophecy, is rescued and taken to the Court of the King of Corinth. Growing up as the son of Polybus, he learns from the Delphic oracle that he will kill his father and marry his mother. In leaving the only home he has ever known, to avoid the dreadful doom, he meets it. Life as interpreted by Greek drama is a constant struggle with Fate in which Fate must finally be the victor. Now some of the best examples of Greek fatalism occur in modern short-stories. Hawthorne's "The Ambitious Guest" celebrates Fate triumphant. The doom of the ambitious young man and the family with whose fates his own was linked is a world instance of the uselessness of striving against the will of the gods. The inseparable pessimism may be healthfully disregarded in the contemplation of the incontrovertible theme which represents man as an atom, lightly to be brushed aside in the sweep of destiny.

Hawthorne loved to consider the various aspects of this man-Fate struggle. In "David Swan" he plays with the idea that love, death, and riches may in turn approach a human being who is unaware of the approach and who jogs on serenely, not fated to know. In "Rappaccini's Daughter" he exhibits Rappaccini's struggle to pervert nature; but nature, rather, as an expression of immutable law. What has been established is established, Hawthorne says in effect, and man will mind his own business, doing well not to meddle with the eternal. In "The

Birthmark" he reiterates the struggle. Do not try to improve upon what is but the sign of a supreme will, against which man opposes himself only to be broken. In "The Ambitious Guest" and in "David Swan" the struggle is negligible, for Fate is supreme from start to finish: in the other two stories the conflict is more pronounced; man makes considerable headway, but fails at last. Thomas Hardy, the successor of Hawthorne in the "Fate triumphant" story increases his poignant effect by the use of irony. To mention but one instance, Ella Marchmill and Robert Trewe, of "An Imaginative Woman," were destined never to see each other, but only just missed meeting. Fate and man, then, in Hawthorne and Hardy hardly "come nobly to the grapple"; for the former is constantly or finally uppermost. In Katherine Mansfield's "The Fly," symbolism heightens pessimism. The boss who observes the insect's attempt to free itself from calamitous blobs of ink stands for Fate, God, Providence—what you will—and the fly, for man himself. Again, Fate is first and finally supreme. A number of Morley Callaghan's stories under the caption "American Made" (in his "A Native Argosy") leave the reader depressed by the futility of life. Some of these are "Last Spring They Came Over," "A Girl with Ambition," and "The Life of Sadie Hall." At least two of these stories elicit the thought, "Fate said 'Thumbs down' for these characters, and from the beginning."

Kipling's stories of the supernatural, on the other hand, illustrate the struggle in which both the material and the spiritual have a fair chance at victory. In "The Phantom 'Rickshaw" the world of flesh and the world of spirit are at odds with each other, with the chances of

victory fair for each side. In "They" the struggle is that of the flesh to meet the spirit, the flesh being ultimately successful. Both forces combine to destroy the barrier between the world of the natural and the supernatural. That Kipling has been most interested in this uneven conflict between the open and the occult, a long list of stories will bear witness; among which are "The Mark of the Beast," "The Return of Imray," "Wireless," "The House Surgeon," "At the End of the Passage," "The Dog Hervey," and "In the Same Boat." Henry James finds similar pleasure in this type of struggle. In "The Turn of the Screw" the struggle is on the part of the governess to lay the spirits of the ghosts, to save the souls of the children. She must encounter the direct opposition of the spirits and also of the children. In "The Real Right Thing" the struggle is that of George Withermore to write the biography of Ashton Doyne against the ghostly objection of the dead author. The spirit of the dead man conquers. The thoughtful reader may prefer Henry James's stories not, as the cynic declares, for their style or their lack of plot, but for the basic element of conflict. Will the ghost or the governess win in "The Turn of the Screw"? Who will emerge victorious in "The Real Right Thing"? "The Beldonald Holbein"?

If the student will compare stories developing the sort of struggle just illustrated with those showing a struggle between physical forces, he will recognise that the quality of the struggle determines largely the quality of the story. The attempt to reach food lying under several feet of water in the hold of the vessel suggests just such a story of physical prowess and adventure as Stockton

produced in "The Christmas Wreck." Again, a wolf stalks a man, each hungry, each sick, each waiting and hoping for the collapse of the other. Such a test of endurance calls up a primitive setting—a forest or the frozen North—such an ice-bound region as Jack London has used in his "Love of Life." The physical struggle celebrates the body and its prowess; the mental, moral, or psychic exploits the hidden forces, the spiritual potentiality underlying the physical world.

2. *Complication*

From the preceding part of this chapter, it is clear that a plot may consist 1. of a struggle developed in one main incident; 2. of a series of struggles, culminating in a climax. Management of plot in general is continued in Chapter V. Meantime, as a prerequisite for learning to construct more pretentious short-story plots, it is necessary to understand the business of complication. Complication, in this book, means the entanglement of two lines of interest, one of which must be subordinated to the other for story unity.[1] This secondary line is not a sub-plot; but it bears the same relation to the main line as the sub-plot of a novel bears to the main plot. The Incident, the short-story, and the novel are three terms in an ascending series, any one of which may be understood better by comparison with the others.

Analysis of finished narratives will serve here to introduce the principle of entanglement. And for the first

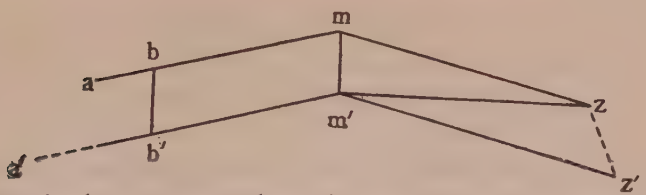
[1] Cf. Aristotle: "More specifically, by Complication is meant everything from the beginning of the story up to that critical point, the last in a series of incidents, out of which comes the change of fortune. . . ." The Art of Poetry, Lane Cooper's Translation, page 60.

example, since one may be helped to understand an art by considering it at its lowest terms, let us choose a story the complication of which is too obvious, "Buffy's Hegira," by Marie Manning. A buffalo escapes from an enclosure where he is confined as an artist's model. A young woman sets off on her horse to warn the village that the animal is at large. So far, the action is that of the Incident; the material has hardly sufficient weight or magnitude for the short-story. If the young woman warns the neighbourhood and manages to steer Buffy back into his corral, the Incident is closed. But at the beginning of the story the author emphasises another thread: the girl has a lover, who cannot persuade her to marry him. Shortly after she rides out, he appears, sends her home, and subsequently lassos the escaped Buffy. Then the girl, of course, capitulates. If "Markheim" be represented diagrammatically and roughly by the line

then "Buffy's Hegira" will be represented by two lines

representing the chase at the end of which the buffalo is captured, and

representing the struggle of Tom Standish to win Molly Boothby. The two lines are linked in this way:



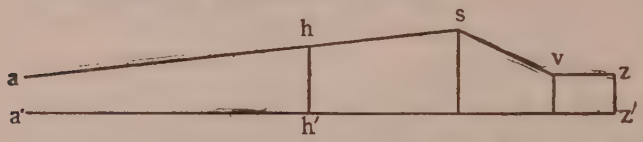
That is, b represents the point at which Molly sets out to circumvent Buffy, and m represents the entrance of Tom; the two lines are linked only between the time Molly set out and the time Tom captured the buffalo. But it is the presence of the entanglement which makes of the Incident a short-story. Obviously, the second line of interest is in many respects the more important. But if the author had told the love story of Tom and Molly from beginning to end, with the capture of Buffy as a minor incident, she would have had a very usual narrative with a singularly excrescent incident on the main line. Or if the courtship were represented as one that pursued its devious way through peculiarly thrilling and novel adventures of which the buffalo chase is one, the series would have offered a more or less detached relationship to one another. Therefore, the author wisely subordinated the larger struggle to the one less important but more significant for story purposes.

"My Disreputable Friend, Mr. Raegen," by Richard Harding Davis, illustrates a more closely knit complication. Rags Raegen knocks down Pike McGonegal. The blow is fatal, but Rags does not wait to learn this detail. Now the race in which Rags is pursued by the police might form an interesting Incident resulting either in escape or capture; but the author has introduced a complicating thread by the use of which he converts the Incident into a short-story. Rags takes refuge in an empty

apartment, under a heap of tossed-up bedding. The police enter and discuss the probabilities of his escape. They leave. Rags remains quiet for a longer period, to be aroused the second time by a child. The child becomes the cause of the complication. If Rags escapes, he may leave her to starvation; if he stands by the child, he will be captured.

Again the two lines of interest may be stated:

I. Main line of interest: Rags Raegen flees from the police: will he be captured?
II. Second line of interest: A baby is left in an apartment house: what will become of the baby?



hh' stands for the mutual discovery of Rags and the baby.

s for the moral struggle, the dramatic climax. Shall he leave the baby to her fate and make good his final escape?

v for the climax of action: Rags gives himself up, the baby in his arms.

z in the first line of action indicates Rags's acquittal.

z' in the second line indicates the baby's fate; it remains with Rags.

In short, unification of the two lines produces a story which tells how the fortunes of the fugitive become bound up with those of the child.

Having analysed "Buffy's Hegira" and "Mr. Raegen" for their constituent complicating lines, let us turn to

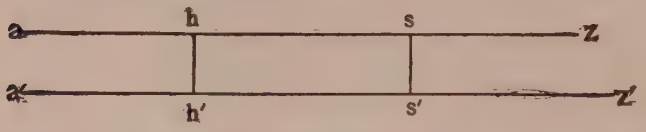
an example wherein we may study the principle of complication more synthetically. An author once recounted the genesis and growth of a plot which may be recapitulated here as follows:[2]

The "germ" of the story is the character who happens to be the champion rat-catcher of the world. He enters the hold of a vessel where, with a rifle and a pointed stick, he captures the rats, which he drops into a bag. Now, an Incident might narrate the difficulties of the catcher in his chase after a veteran rat, and the climax of the action would be the capture of the rodent. But the author wished to write a story, not to tell a mere Incident. Casting about for a complicating thread, he naturally thought of introducing a boy into the fictive material; for the story would obviously be one of adventure. But how far has this addition advanced him? There are now two rat-chasers, instead of one only. Rather tritely, perhaps, the idea of a stowaway, an escaping thief, came to mind. Now, the plot threads draw together with swiftness, the main thread having to do with the catcher and his assistant, the subordinate thread having to do with the thief. The complication finds a solution in the capture of the thief by the two catchers. The details of the plot consist mainly of these facts: The boy while searching one section of the hold suddenly finds himself attacked and the gun wrested from his grasp. He flings the bags against the assailant; they gnaw through the bag and in their tumultuous exit overcome the thief. The boy recaptures the gun and holds the thief until help arrives in the person of the old rat-catcher.

[2] Homer Croy, in a lecture before this writer's first year short-story class. The material is adapted here for the purposes of illustration.

Again, the complication may be represented by diagram:

I. Main line of interest: That of the rat-catcher and his boy assistant.
II. Secondary line of interest: That of the thief who is attempting an escape.



That is, the complication exists for a comparatively short period, hh' representing the point of discovery of the thief by the boy and ss' representing his capture.

Let us consider the type of complication found in "The Monkey's Paw," by W. W. Jacobs. Others of its kind are in Richard Harding Davis's "A Charmed Life" and O. Henry's "Tobin's Palm." The genesis of such a story plot may be, let us say, in a wish. A man happens to desire a certain object. He shortly receives it, but at the cost of something dear, or through a tragedy which seems to fall out by chance or coincidence. But here is lack of complication. A story constructed on this line of action alone would present some such scheme as the following:

Cause: A father wishes 200 pounds.
Seeming Effect: The son is killed and 200 pounds are given as compensation.
Cause: The father wishes the son alive again.
Effect: He returns from the grave.
Cause: Father wishes him to return to the grave.
Effect: The son vanishes.

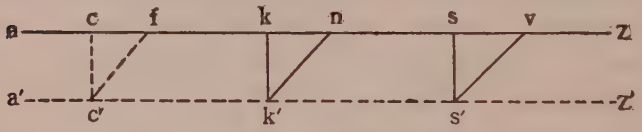
This scheme is utterly illogical and would appeal in elaborated form to the credulity of not even a child. It is without convincing power, without unity. What will make it *seem* convincing and unified? The presence of an agent in another line of action; the device of a fortune teller as motivating force, an omen, a curse—these or other means might be employed. Mr. Jacobs chose a monkey's paw which had had a spell put upon it by a fakir. In conformity with the principles of magic, the paw is good for three wishes. The plot looms hazily as one possessing three striking situations: the wishing and the fulfilment under three different conditions. How, now, may cause and effect seem dominated by the monkey's paw? Let the fulfilment of the first wish be the tragedy. Now, up to this point only two persons are needed. But if the father uses the paw the second time to wish his son's return and the third time to wish his disappearance, the two acts are inconsistent; moreover, the scheme lacks dignity. A struggle is needed other than conflicting desires in the father's mind. The author introduces another member of the family, the mother, one who in the planning of the author possibly may have suggested herself before either of the other characters. Now the plot assumes this shape: Apparently through his father's wish for two hundred pounds, Herbert White loses his life. Mr. White receives two hundred pounds as an apparent result of the son's death. Mrs. White, inconsolable, prevails upon her husband to wish the boy alive again. The father, to prevent her looking upon the son's mangled form, makes with the paw the third and last wish—the outcome of his struggle to frustrate her desire. And the *story,* as elaborated with accessories of

forecast, scene work, suspense and the proper passage of time, gains unity and plausibility even with adult minds.

Diagrammatically, the plot complication may be represented thus:

I. Main line of interest: A father wishes for money, which comes to him, as it happens, through the death of his son. He desires the return of the son, and then negates the wish (A series of three embryonic struggles).

II. Second line of interest: A monkey's paw, supernatural agent, causes the fulfilment of three wishes.

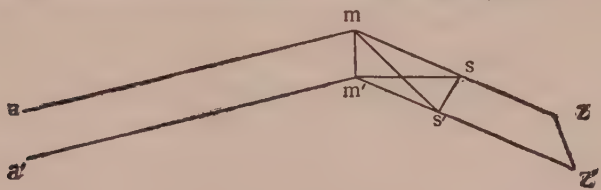


That is, the father in line I makes with the paw a wish, let us say at point c. Through the efficacy of the paw the wish is fulfilled at point f. The succeeding instances are repetitions.

An interesting and simple complication is one frequently used by O. Henry. The *story* gains interest and surprise from the manner of presentation, but the plot possesses its value in the dénouement that comes about after a peculiar cross between the two lines of interest. Let us look at "The Gift of the Magi" as a concrete example. Briefly, the narrative rehearses the struggle of Della, who needs money wherewith to buy Jim a Christmas present. She finds a way, and purchases a platinum fob. Meanwhile, Jim has likewise had his struggle, and has found a way to buy Della a present. When they exchange gifts, after the climax of action for each, they discover that the nature of the means taken to purchase

the gifts destroys their immediate practical value. Jim has sold his watch to obtain a pair of combs, whereas Della has cut off her hair to secure money for the fob. In other stories the author repeated the general nature of the plot with equal success. (See Exercises.)

The plot may be represented by the diagram:



That is, at m Della sells her hair; at s she buys the fob; at m′ Jim sells his watch; at s′ he buys the combs.

There is a direct link between m and s′ (the selling of the hair and the buying of the combs), and between m′ and s (the selling of the watch and the buying of the fob). It is this connection which labels such a story as one of "cross-purposes."

It should be noticed that in the story *presentation,* only the dénouement reveals that the previous "cross" exists.

az represents Della's struggle, in which she is successful; a′z′ represents Jim's struggle, in which he is successful. The climax of action for each is the presentation of the gifts.

The preceding examples should make clear that entanglement or complication results from a use of two or more lines of interest. What is the value of two lines of interest? In general, the second line buttresses the struggle in the main line. It may, for example, bring about the end in the main action, may motivate the main action, or may add its weight to disturb the balance between the contending forces in the main line. In "Buf-

fy's Hegira" the escape of the buffalo motivates Molly's riding out; Tom's love for Molly (second line interest) motivates his entrance upon the scene. Whether the capture of the animal or the capitulation of Molly be regarded as the end desired, both things are effected by the linking of the lines. In "Mr. Raegen" the end of Rags's chase from the police is brought about by the baby's line of interest meeting Rags's line. In "The Monkey's Paw" the motivation for the 200-pound gift, the return of the son, and the departure of the son is found in the influence of the paw, an influence which moves steadily parallel with the main line of interest.

The second line may be used to suggest or interpret the main line. If in Kipling's "Wireless" the main action (which we may assume to be the attempt of the spirit world to transmit a message to the physical, through Shaynor) were unsupported by the secondary action, the story would lose its plausibility, its fascination, its suggestiveness, and, above all, its thought-provoking power. The attempt of the wireless operators to receive an ordinary message may be regarded as the struggle in the secondary line. A single reading will inform the reader how cleverly these threads of interest are intertwined. Apparently the soul of Keats, or the Over-soul which dominates Keats as well as Shaynor, in trying to communicate with Shaynor used the wireless apparatus successfully; but in doing so disturbed the sending and receiving of the wireless operators. The thrill and surprise of the dénouement could not possibly exist were the struggle in either line unsupported by that of the second.

The easy plan followed by most amateurs is to shut the victim up with his struggle, in a cage or vacuum, and

to allow no intrusion from the outside. This management results in the "She-balanced-the-for-and-against, the-pro-and-con, the-honesty-and-self-interest . . . —and-at-last-the-good-conquered" sort of thing. It is just the outside intrusion which the writer needs to motivate action in connection with outcome; complication may determine outcome.

The student should remember so to combine his lines as to effect unity. Stockton's "A Tale of Negative Gravity" presents two widely diverse threads of interest, too loosely connected.[3] By a machine which overcomes the attraction the earth has for bodies on its surface, an inventor performs wonders in locomotion and overcoming inertia. Accidentally, he is caught poised in mid-air. The main struggle, the inventor's attempt to get back to earth, proves unsuccessful until his wife comes out and fishes him down with a hook and line. The secondary interest concerns itself with the love affair between the inventor's daughter and the son of Mr. Gilbert. The immediate complication results because Mr. Gilbert, ignorant of the invention and believing the inventor insane, has insisted that the engagement be broken. The dénouement of the love affair results through his discovering the truth, and his consenting to the marriage. In the hands of an amateur unification would have been hopeless; even in Stockton's, the attempt to unify is obvious.

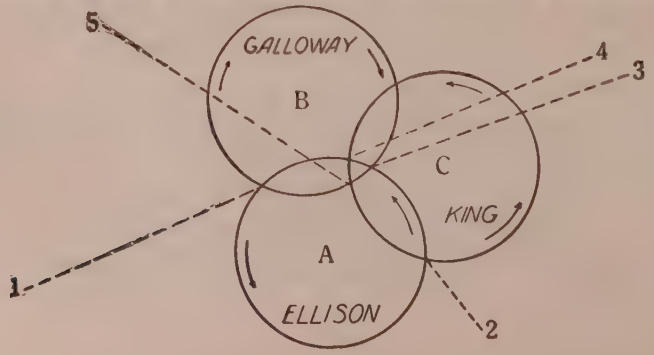
[3] The whimsical *story* is not therefore the less readable. Stockton's stories were favourites with Stevenson. In a letter to Edmund Gosse, dated Nov. 15, 1884, he writes:

"My Stockton if I failed to like,
It were a sheer depravity,
For I went down with the *Thomas Hyke*,
And up with the *Negative Gravity!*

I adore these tales."—Letters, II, 251, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911.

In most of the examples adduced so far a continuous struggle exists in one line of interest, sometimes in both lines. After the student has become expert in devising struggles and simple complications, he may turn his attention to the plot dominated by complication. Struggle will necessarily exist, but it may be subdued with agreeable effect. For example, O. Henry's "The Last of the Troubadours" contains at least two instances of forces pitted against each other: King James against Old Man Ellison; Sam Galloway against King James. But to the neat intertwining of the various interests may be attributed the ultimate success of the story. In the diagram below let circle A represent Old Man Ellison's line, from the time Sam Galloway (represented by circle B) rode up to his ranch to the time when Sam rode back from the killing of King James (represented by circle C).

1. Sam comes to the ranch.
2. Ellison first meets King James.
3. Ellison tells Sam of the demands made by King James.
4. Ellison's second meeting with King.
5. Sam kills King.
6. Coincident with I. Story comes full circle to starting point, in the return of Galloway to the ranch.



Employ entanglement, then, as here for the enrichment of the narrative, and try to use it so skilfully as to unite the two or more threads in a stronger chain or in a symmetrical pattern. Avoid dragging in a second line unless it can be incorporated as an integral part. In "The Pink Shawls" and in "Little-Girl-Afraid-of-a-Dog," Mary Wilkins Freeman introduced too patently a love story for the purpose of eking out the slight main thread. Study the cause for failure in such examples and the reasons for success in the adequately managed complications. Observe the working of complication in various types of story, the way in which it supports the main action, unifies it, interprets it, motivates it, gives it larger significance, or brings about an effective climax.

Exercises for Chapters III and IV

Jane Topham, having a few hours between trains in a large city, decides to visit her friends, the Jones family. She looks up the address in the directory. Construct an Incident, using at least three minor climaxes in the single line of interest growing out of the fact that there are so many names under "Jones" as to cause error on her part. Having finished the Incident, then find a second line of interest, combine it with the first, and write the plot for a short-story.

An old lady member of the Home across the street from the Woman's College makes up her mind to be present at a reception given by the Senior Class. Write an Incident, showing her successful attempt to become one of the guests. Find a second interest and combine it with the first line to make a short-story.

A family moving from Backwood to Freshwater, a distance of thirty miles, must take to their new home the one milk cow in their possession. They cannot pay freight. One of the boys must drive her through the country. Write an Incident giving an account of the boy's struggles. Avoid tediousness. After you have written the Incident, use the same idea for a short-story, combining with the one line a second interest, as in the preceding exercises.

Find the struggle in all the stories mentioned in exercises for Chapter I.

What is the struggle in each of the following stories? D. H. Lawrence's "Tickets, Please!"; Irvin S. Cobb's "Snake Doctor," Rose Wilder Lane's "Innocence," and "Yarbwoman," P. G. Wodehouse's "The Purity of the Turf," Roark Bradford's "River Witch," Du Bose Heyward's "Crown's Bess," and "The Half-Pint Flask," Irvin S. Cobb's "No Dam' Yankee," Katharine Brush's "Seven Blocks Apart," Louis Bromfield's "The Cat That Lived at the Ritz," Lyle Saxon's "Cane River," Rose Sidney's "Butterflies," Ada Jack Carver's "Redbone," Manuel Komroff's "The Christian Bite," Charles Caldwell Dobie's "The Hands of the Enemy," Theodore Dreiser's "A Mayor and His People."

Study the development of the struggle in these: Sarah Orne Jewett's "A White Heron," Rudyard Kipling's "The House Surgeon," Richard Curle's "Old Hoskyns," Richard Washburn Child's "The Gorilla," John Russell's "The Fourth Man," Mary Johnston's "Elephants through the Country," Robert Lemmon's "The Bamboo Trap," Stephen Vincent Benét's "Uriah's Son," Edith Mirrielees's "Professor Boynton Rereads History," Wilbur Daniel Steele's "What Do You Mean—Americans?" Harriet Welles's "Progress," Abbie Carter Goodloe's

"Claustrophobia," Bill Adams's "Home is the Sailor," Hugh Walpole's "The Tarn," Fannie Hurst's "Humoresque."

Observe how the epic of daily life is treated in Edna Ferber's "9 to 5," and "Hey, Taxi!"

Make a diagram to show the complication in (a) Kipling's "The Brushwood Boy," (b) Cobb's "No Dam' Yankee," (c) Thomas Hardy's "The Three Strangers," (d) Katharine Brush's "Seven Blocks Apart," (e) Walter Duranty's "The Parrot," (f) Michael Arlen's "The Dancer of Paris," (g) Samuel Merwin's "More Stately Mansions," A. E. Coppard's "Alas, Poor Bollington!"

In constructing his plot, said Stevenson, the writer should see that every incident illustrates the motive, that every property employed bears the near relation of congruity or contrast. "Avoid a sub-plot, unless as sometimes happens in Shakespeare, the sub-plot be a reversion or complement of the main intrigue." With this advice in mind and, remembering that Stevenson's suggestions are not infrequently scorned by the most ardent admirers of Katherine Mansfield and A. E. Coppard read Miss Mansfield's "The Fly," and Coppard's "Arabesque: The Mouse," Do the sub-plots of these stories complement the main intrigue? Read also Henry James's "The Real Thing," "Broken Wings," and "The Madonna of the Future," for a similar relation of sub-plot to main plot.

What is the plot formula common to these stories by O. Henry—"A Service of Love," "Lost on Dress Parade," "While the Auto Waits," "The Shocks of Doom," "Transients in Arcadia," "Two Thanksgiving Day Gentlemen," "Proof of the Pudding," "The World

and the Door," "The Whirligig of Life," "The Gift of the Magi"?

What is the plot formula common to these stories by W. W. Jacobs—"The Money Box," "Lawyer Quince," "The Third String," "Homeward Bound," "Self Help," "Peter's Pence," The Changeling," "A Love-Knot," "Back to Back," "The Weaker Vessel," "Easy Money," "The Lady of the Barge," "Captain Rogers," "Paying Off," "Family Cares," "Made to Measure"?

Dorothy Brewster writes in her notes on "The Secret Sharer," included in "A Book of Modern Short Stories," "At the end, as we reflect on the story, we are not wholly sure whether the fugitive was there in the flesh and swam away to the distant shore, or whether he was a projection of the conflict going on in the captain's soul." What is your interpretation of the struggle?

CHAPTER V

PLOT: COMPOSITION

Requisites: simplicity; distinctness; "beginning, middle, and end"; these Aristotelian characteristics as interpreted in terms of the short-story plot; illustrations of chief steps; incidents should be well-linked; relation of logical plot to logical story; individuality a desirable characteristic; the subdual of the too novel; finding the significant in the commonplace.

Whether a plot consists of an organisation of incidents in one main line or in two lines of interest, it must have certain requisites. Chief among these is simplicity. A combination of more than two lines offers difficulties in unification which should bar the beginner from attempting it. O. Henry, who mastered all the intricacy of plot construction, achieved comparative simplicity of effect in the finished product; A. E. Coppard, among contemporary young English writers, perhaps possesses this ability in highest degree. Omitting all but essential threads, with these both authors effect clever entanglements. The beginner, however, will find himself running into the complexity, and even the length of a novel if he attempts too much complication, and should practise first the development of simple themes and plots.

The organisation of incidents should also be distinct. Every good plot will possess the characteristics defined by Aristotle, a beginning, a middle and an end. It would appear, at first sight, that these terms are sufficiently clear

to any one who is writing stories; it would seem that no one could fail to begin and to end. But a common error novices make is that of producing a sketch, an episode, a chapter out of a novel, or stopping short at the end of the first incident of a series. It should be kept in mind always that the beginning does not itself come after anything else in a necessary sequence, but is that after which some other thing does come about. It should be borne in mind also that the end is that which comes after something else in a necessary or usual sequence, but has nothing following it.[1] If the author follows any other procedure than that of determining and developing the plot marked by a beginning, middle and end, he probably strays into the "other story," or leaves his tale incomplete, or apparently "lifts" a division out of some longer work or one of greater magnitude.

In the modern short-story plot these three parts may be interpreted in terms of the following: 1. the initial impulse or initial incident; 2. the steps in the struggle or complication to the turning point (or dramatic climax); the steps in the plot between the dramatic climax, and 3. the climax of action (or end of action), and 4. the dénouement. In the developed story this plot *order* is not essential or even always desirable; manipulation of the plot features may result in a story very dif-

[1] Not infrequently the contemporary story prefers a conclusion in which the end is left dangling; but, if so, the purpose of the *story* is none the less clear. Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers" ends: "I can't stand to think about him waiting in the room and knowing he's going to get it. It's too damned awful."

"Well," said George, "you better not think about it."

The author knows that unknown horrors are greater than known horrors. Moreover, it has been made clear that if Ole stays in that room, the killers will shoot him; if he goes out, they will shoot him. The reader ends the story, in fact.

ferent from the one which places them in the A B C order. For example, it is more than probable that Stevenson's "Sire de Maletroit's Door" first had this sequence: 1. The Sire arranges a trap to catch the cavalier young man who has been paying attention to his niece. 2. The trap catches the wrong man. 3. He appears before the Sire, and so on. For the reader, Stevenson made the initial incident the chase wherein Denis de Beaulieu flees from the officers of the enemy. (This management also takes into account the angle of narration or point of view. See Chapter VII.) For extension of this business of plot manipulation, see the following chapter.

But assuming that plot construction, not final presentation, is under way, let us continue with the steps. By initial impulse, then is meant the force which sets the ball rolling, the incitement for the whole action; it is the actual beginning. This impulse may be expanded in the finished story into some paragraphs, as in "Markheim" the killing of the dealer is the impulse which sets going the larger action; it may be repeated, for emphasis, though needing only "I hate you!" for its expression, as hatred is expressed and then repeated in Hugh Walpole's "The Tarn": "Lord! how Fenwick hated him at that moment!" And, again, "Fenwick . . . felt suddenly an exquisite pleasure of hatred." Finally, "Fenwick hated him the more for that."

The beginning of Richard Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game" is told succintly: "He [Rainsford] lunged for it; a short, hoarse cry came from his lips as he realized he had reached too far out and lost his balance. The cry was pinched off short as the blood-warm waters of the Caribbean Sea closed over his head." That is, if

he had not fallen overboard the yacht, there would have been no story. In "The Mark of the Beast" Fleet's grinding the ashes of his cigar butt against the forehead of Hanuman is the gist of the incident that starts the action.[2] It is obvious that each of these four initial impulses follows nothing else in necessary sequence, and equally obvious that because of them something else must come to pass.

After the initial impulse follow steps in the development of the struggle or complication, which have been named variously, minor crises, or minor climaxes, or steps in the rising action leading to the major crisis or climax. "Rising action" presupposes that the action ascends in interest to a high point, from which it descends to a level of interest not quite so low as that on which it began.

Of the stories just mentioned for illustrating the impulse that sets the action going let us choose, first, "The Tarn" for exemplifying these minor peaks or steps ascending to the highest peak. Fenwick's hatred, then, causes the immediately following action.

1. He suggests a walk and leads the way to the tarn.
2. Foster mentions that he cannot swim.
3. They walk to the deep end of the jetty.

In so brief a story these three details, briefly expanded, are sufficient preparation for the dramatic climax. Second, notice the carefully built steps rising to the dramatic climax in "The Most Dangerous Game." Rainsford, it will be recalled, has fallen from the yacht.

1. He swims toward the receding yacht, but soon abandons the effort (Note that here is a tiny climax embodied

[2] The incident itself is well motivated by Fleet's drunkenness.

in the action, a climax in which Rainsford is defeated).

2. He swims toward land, hearing a pistol shot not far away, and eventually flings himself down at the edge of the jungle. (In this small climax, he is successful.)

3. He searches for habitation and comes, at dark, to the brightly lighted building of the pointed towers (Successful, again).

4. He is admitted by General Zaroff, who just prevents the servitor Ivan from shooting him; is given raiment and an excellent dinner; discovers that the General is a hunter; learns in a deliberately unfolded scene that he, Rainsford, must serve as quarry in a man hunt or take the alternative of being thrown to Ivan and the dogs.

Observe that so far all the minor climaxes compose a greater climax, which is yet minor in relation to the entire series. For the new initial impulse is the recognition that he must fight for his life in a chase in which he is the hunted. The line of interest, then, begins a new ascent and follows the plan unfolded on page 66 above.

By dramatic climax I mean the turning point at which one force balances with the other for final ascendance. For the *reader* of a story wherein the former inferior force becomes the superior, and vice versa, the point of dramatic climax is not difficult to determine. So in reading "The Most Dangerous Game," we are aware that the dramatic climax is that one in which Rainsford leaps into the ocean; and we know, after completing the tale, that it was the one of dramatic reverse; for after it, Rainsford had the upper hand. This shifting of authority works twice in "The Tarn." For a moment after pushing Fenwick off the jetty, Foster is happy, "conscious of a warm relief." Surely, the tables are turned if his enemy is dead! The remainder, however, shows Foster

pursued:—"someone else seemed to be running too. He stopped, and the other runner also stopped." And so on to the end, when Foster is found dead, he is haunted by Fenwick and at length dragged down to a watery grave. The rationalization of his drowning does not destroy the fact that for Foster his enemy triumphed, after all. This story may be regarded then, as one of two major dramatic climaxes (a climax for the physical followed by one for the psychic), in the first of which Foster triumphs, in the second of which he loses. Or, the first climax may be regarded as a minor climax preceding the true dramatic climax in which Foster dies—this latter being bound up with the end of the action.

Now if the story shows no dramatic reverse, but ends with the same power in the ascendent which was in the ascendent at the beginning, the dramatic climax may be (for the *reader*) more difficult to determine. Denis de Beaulieu, from start to finish, is in the power of the Sire de Maletroit. Yet the intention and the attempt to escape are evident to him who reads the story, up to the point where the Sire leaves Denis and Blanche finally together to settle the question for themselves. The entanglement and the rise of interest have reached the tensest moment. What will Denis do about it?

William Froyle is the dominant force from start to finish in Arnold Bennett's "The Idiot." Yet there is opportunity afforded through the appearance of the idiot for Froyle to be dissuaded from his suicidal purpose. The reader possibly thinks for a moment that the purpose has been successfully, if accidentally, balked. But the brief trembling of the balance is soon converted into a

steady cant in the direction of William's purpose. The dramatic climax is past.

The modern short-story often concludes speedily after the dramatic climax. Having secured his tense moment, the experienced writer hesitates at the risk of weakening it by a long-drawn, falling action. So "The Sire de Maletroit's Door" requires only a brief moment for final adjustment after the dramatic climax; Markheim having come to a decision in the scene with his visitant, walks down the stairs and gives himself up; the idiot slaps the twitching body of William Froyle, that the reader may be sure the deed was accomplished, and ends the story with his laughter. Rainsford, after swimming back to the house gains admittance—Ivan is dead and the dogs are with the General—awaits the appearance of his host (all these details are left to the reader's imagination) and quickly terminates the struggle. The older stories, like the older dramas, frequently employed a more extended falling action. "The Necklace" represents Madame Loisel up to the dramatic climax (loss of the necklace) as young, beautiful, admired. After the climax she becomes old, uninteresting, homely. That the contrast may be impressed on his reader, the author is in no great haste to reach the climax of action.

The climax of action (literally the end of the action, is used here in contradistinction to dramatic climax. The one term, "climax," loosely employed to mean either of these structural steps is differentiated herein to avoid confusion. The two may become coincident, and tend to do so in proportion as the falling action is shortened. In this respect the short story follows the fashion of life: in days gone by a man reached middle age and—if he

were so fortunate as to live out his days—descended to his grave by comfortable degrees. Nowadays, even the centenarian goes to his office and works; he draws together the high period of his life and the end of life. The climax of action and the dénouement are more usually synonymous, however; for the dénouement is the issue to which the train of events leads, the outcome. Dénouement, again, is technically equivalent to catastrophe; but because the latter term is now suggestive of calamity or disaster it may be conserved preferably for stories of tragic conclusion. In "The Tarn," the climax of action (for Foster) is expressed in the sentence: "A cold hand reached up and caught his naked thigh." The story might end there, and if it so ended, the dénouement would be conveyed in the same sentence; but Walpole adds a dozen lines in which the maid enters, to find the dead body. "The only sign of disorder was an overturned water jug. A small pool of water stained the carpet." Here, then, is the dénouement which, by the way, implies so much more than it states: the reader recognizes that to Foster in his half-waking, half-sleeping condition, that water jug somehow was metamorphosed.

The conclusion of the *story* may be bound up in the words which convey the climax of action or dénouement (or catastrophe), or it may consist of a moral appendage, a reflection, or even a brief informal essay added to the narrative close. "The Tarn" is complete, structurally, with the words quoted above. Again, the author adds a passage, which is the conclusion: "It was a lovely morning. A twig of ivy idly, in the little breeze, tapped the pane." Such a conclusion forms no integral part of the

plot. In like manner, the beginning (although the first words may present an initial impulse or incident) has not of necessity a plot function. The formal beginning rarely serves to perform an office of plot; the beginning which summarizes or presents antecedent circumstances merely paves the way for plot. "The Mark of the Beast," for example, begins with a statement which, in spite of its later obvious bearing, has no plot value; it is followed by a summary of circumstances which prepare the reader for the plot action.

Now the component parts of the plot should be well linked, closely knit. The worst plot is that in which the incidents follow one another without probability or necessity—the episodic plot. The best plot is that in which every step is logical, either caused by a preceding step or causing a succeeding one, illustrating probability or necessity in the sequence of incident. At every step, though he may be unaware of his self-propounded questions, the writer is asking, "What happened next? Why? What will be the result?" "The Tarn" and "The Most Dangerous Game" illustrate such causation and effect, though each plot has a weak link in its chain; Conrad's "The Secret Sharer" and Russell's "The Fourth Man" illustrate it.

See how cause precedes effect, each effect becoming in turn a new cause, in "The Fourth Man." Three criminals, incorrigible, have escaped from a penal settlement in New Caledonia: Dubosc, the doctor; the depraved Fenayrou, and Perroquet of the beaked nose. They are on a raft, manned by a black, a Canaque. A ship expected to meet them beyond the river mouth, at open sea, has not come and an untoward wind blows the

raft, or catamaran, which can not be made to lie to. The doctor, who is leader, "takes certain necessary measures." First he puts the three on rations, without consideration for the black; they mutiny, but are outwitted by the doctor; Fenayrou sleeps while on watch and is roused by Perroquet; again, the doctor narrowly averts the death of one man or both (Fenayrou has a knife); a current draws the boat from sight of land; a calm succeeds; the black man is the only one not suffering; they debate the cause, and think perhaps he has hidden supplies; wantonly, witlessly, they give him a grueling and fling him down when they are breathless, exhausted; under the heat, the two more brutal natures become infuriated with the doctor; he begins to regret his intervention in their earlier fight; the black man continues to sleep, to live placidly; the doctor's scientific interest in the phenomenon prevents the others from throwing him overboard; another dawn of heat brings the day of climax. Fenayrou begs for water; the doctor refuses; Fenayrou cries out "A ship! A ship!" When the others spin about to see, he grasps the water bottle. Perroquet catches him tilting the bottle and with one blow of the paddle flattens him out. Dubosc snatches the bottle and when Perroquet insists on his share at once, the doctor serves it, four, five thimblefuls, holding Perroquet's glance while he pours. Perroquet collapses. The doctor remarks, "The best man wins," and raises the flask for a drink. "The best man wins" is echoed and Fenayrou, striking like a dying snake, drives home a knife between the doctor's shoulders. After some time, the Canaque sings, and after a time a boat comes—to take the men, pickled in brine, to Sydney. The black is left alone, he is only a "dam nigger"; but he will

sail back to New Caledonia. (See more about this story under Clues, page 281). In "The Secret Sharer" the links are tied together with the beauty of inevitability and with the added suggestion of quite another story than the one that meets the eye.

Some of the most skilful writers conceal plots so well they are apparently missing; A. E. Coppard, for example. Take his "Broadsheet Ballad," in which young William betrays the two sisters, Agnes and Edith. Forced to marry one, he spins a coin, which decrees Agnes. Ultimately, Agnes is poisoned by Edith, but the guilt falls upon William, who is hanged. How would this plot serve an amateur? Every stage of the action is fit, apparently, for melodrama. Coppard, however, chooses for presenting the facts a tiler and a mason who, by their simple dialect and unperturbed acceptance of them, trap the reader into feeling that he reads a tale of everyday life—plotless, if you like. Again, in "Alas, Poor Bollington!" the poor chap relates the tale of his running away from his wife, who simultaneously ran away from him. In the hands of O. Henry the plot element would have been emphasized; but Coppard ends on a phase of feminine psychology, emphasizing the wife's character—she was annoyed to think she had been living in a fool's paradise, to have believed her husband was having quite the opposite experience; chagrined to learn he had also cut and run, she leaves him again, never to return.

It was stated above that the worst plot is that in which the incidents follow one another without probability or necessity—the episodic plot. This is not to say that the story may be, or may not be, more pleasing than one of a plot well-knitted. In humorous stories, probability and

necessity are minimized; for, as a great writer has said, any story may be made to appear true if written in the right key. Lured into the proper receptivity by the right bait, the reader will absorb whatever sustenance is set engagingly before him. Manuel Komroff's "The Christian Bite" begins with the intention of Charles Adams Scott to "stage a Roman sacrifice on a grand scale." To this end, he would hire the Yale Bowl and get a couple of Christians. Incident follows incident, with amusing irrelevance, in the main struggle; and an even more absurd complication operates to bring the story to a laughing conclusion. Coppard's rehearsal of illogical events in "Big Game" recounts through the eyes of Mrs. Squance an instance of her husband's heroism. She and Squance were at breakfast when a lion walked into the room; taking it for a sheepdog, she waved it out. The lion did not go out; "it pranced up to Mrs. Squance in a genial way" and playfully tried to bite off her hand . . . "then Mrs. Squance realized that she had to contend with a monster that kept swelling bigger and bigger before her very eyes," and so on, through all the vagaries and whimsicalities of a dream. These the reader is willing, eager, to follow; he is interested not so much in the recountal of events as in their illustration of the way a dream experience operates. Farcical exaggeration, or incidents which by their nature contradict fact, may be elaborated in a plot of plausibility—as that of Stockton's "Negative Gravity"—if the key is right. The incidents need not *be* real; but they must *seem* real.

Originality, or individuality, further characterises a good plot. Basic types of plot are few; but a story structure reared on one of them should exemplify an individual

assembly of detail. As examples of short-stories built on the same general base, the student may compare with profit Turgenev's "A Lear of the Steppes" with Mary Wilkins Freeman's "A Village Lear," and Elsie Singmaster's "A Lear of Shireman's Gass," all of which are fashioned after the model of Shakespeare's "King Lear." And it is just as well to remember that "King Lear," by Shakespeare, was but a reshaping of an old plot. The finished drama was Shakespeare's and his alone. But he adapted the plot, as he adapted others, from material at hand. Read the stories built on the "Grande Brétèche" model. After Balzac, Poe wrote "The Black Cat," and "The Cask of Amontillado"; later, Edith Wharton used the same underlying plan for "The Duchess at Prayer." Yet each of the three writers stamps this perennial mould with individuality. An exercise not without value for the beginner is that of selecting some well-known plot and fitting it to material which lies near at hand.

Just as the novel idea should be made to seem natural, so the commonplace should be made to seem significant. May Sinclair's "The Pin-prick" elevates a seemingly trivial bit of life to the stage of drama.[3] So in "The Fault" she makes a woman's habit of twisting a lock of hair the turning point in a line of interest. In general, is may be said, the writer of the psychological story must make mountains out of mole-hills; the writer of the unusual incidents will need to trim off and cut down, in short to make mole-hills out of mountains. In either case, whether the writer magnifies or minifies, he should make a struggle which is absorbing, one which possesses climactic development and dramatic tenseness, with a

[3] See Chapter XIV.

convincing dénouement. Through his plot the author maintains interest. Arnold Bennett, in "The Author's Craft," pertinently remarks: "In proportion as the interest of the story is maintained, the plot is a good one. In so far as it lapses, the plot is a bad one."

From this general discussion of plot building, let us turn in the next chapter to definite types of plot structure, and to a study of plot *order,* as it may appear in the building and the finished story.

Exercises for Chapter V

MODEL FOR PLOT STRUCTURE

THE MARK OF THE BEAST—*Rudyard Kipling.*

Initial Incident:—Fleete grinds the ashes of his cigar butt into the forehead of Hanuman.

Steps in the Rising Action:—1. A Silver Man emerges from the recess behind the image of the god, catches Fleete around the body, and drops his head on Fleete's breast. 2. Priests, at first enraged, become calm. 3. On the way home Fleete smells blood. 4. At home he desires underdone chops. 5. He discloses black marks on his breast. 6. Strickland (second character in the story) begs the narrator to stay over night. 7. Horses fear Fleete. 8. Fleete needs more chops. 9. The Silver Man mews at the party. 10. Fleete grovels about the garden. 11. Wants bloody chops "with gristle." 12. His eyes show a green light back of them.

Dramatic Climax:—"Presently from the room came the long-drawn howl of a wolf"; the howl repeated is answered by one across the fields.

Steps in the Falling Action:—Fleete cannot talk; howls

and spits. 2. He is bound and tied. 3. The Silver Man appears and mews like an otter. 4. The Doctor arrives; he says Fleete has hydrophobia and that death is certain. 5. The cry outside rises again. 6. Preparations for capturing the Silver Man. 7. He is captured. 8. He is tortured. 9. He removes the mark. 10. He is allowed to go. 11. Fleete's soul comes back into his eyes; he sleeps.

Climax of Action and Dénouement:—He wakes in his right mind, oblivious of all that has occurred.

What is the initial impulse or incident in "The Fourth Man," John Russell; "Innocence," Rose Wilder Lane; "Claustrophobia," Abbie Carter Goodloe; "The Killers," Ernest Hemingway; "Because of the Dollars," Joseph Conrad; "To Build a Fire," and "Love of Life," Jack London; "Extra! Extra!" Robert E. Sherwood; "A Start in Life," Ruth Suckow; "Sir Watson Tyler," Harvey O'Higgins; "Splendid with Swords," Wythe Williams.

Point out the steps in the rising action of the preceding stories, and of these: "Butterflies," Rose Sidney; "River Witch," Roark Bradford; "The Hands of the Enemy," Charles Caldwell Dobie; "The Purity of the Turf," P. G. Wodehouse; "Pictures," Katherine Mansfield; "Elephants through the Country," Mary Johnston; "The King of the Cats," Stephen Vincent Benét.

What are (a) the dramatic climax, (b) the climax of action and (c) the dénouement in the stories mentioned above, and in "The Tragedy of a Comic Song," Leonard Merrick; "All the Evidence," Gouverneur Morris; "Rising Water," and "Sinners," Kathleen Norris; "Xingu," Edith Wharton; "Blue Murder," and "Bubbles," Wilbur Daniel Steele; "Mrs. Sabin," Caroline Slade; "Snake

Doctor," Irvin S. Cobb; "I'm a Fool," Sherwood Anderson; "The Fly," Katherine Mansfield.

Read Chaucer's Pardoner's Tale, Irvin S. Cobb's "An "Occurrence up a Side Street," and John Russell's "The Fourth Man." What points have they in common? Is the underlying plot the same in all?

Do you "believe," even while you read, "The King of the Cats"? Did the author expect you to believe? If so, how far? If not, what was his purpose?

Make a list of all stories you have read in which (a) shipwreck on an island is the feature in common, (b) the wrong man is murdered, (c) a motive is misunderstood.

CHAPTER VI

PLOT: STORY TYPES DEPENDENT ON PLOT ORDER

The alphabet chosen for illustrative purposes; I chronological or A B C order and straightway narrative; illustrations, "The Mark of the Beast," etc., variants: 1. first steps omitted; illustration, "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Sculptor's Funeral," "Spider, Spider." 2. middle links omitted, illustration of two kinds—a. omission easily supplied or unnecessary, as in "Extra! Extra!" b. omissions a source of mystery, as in "The Pasha's Garden." 3. final facts or incidents omitted, illustration, "The Lady or the Tiger?" comparison between its plot and mystery plot; note on problem plot; II reversed or Z Y X order, or the detective story order; III combination of orders: 1. intermediate steps omitted and placed after final step; illustrations, "Marjorie Daw," "The Necklace," "A Double-Dyed Deceiver," "Blue Murder," "Gifts of Oblivion," "The Funnel," the surprise ending; 2. reversal of steps or groups in the series; illustration, "A New England Nun," "The Fourth man"; the problem plot; the detective story; discussion of "The Red Headed League"; remarks on the detective story; the value of plot study; the Russian *vs.* the American conte; plot a mechanical thing not to be confused with story presentation.

Assuming that the student has grasped the principle of struggle and complication, and that he has learned to build a closely dove-tailed plot, let us see what possible methods of presenting it are open to him. For the sake of simplicity in illustration, let us suppose that the usual order of plot facts or incidents employed is that of the complete alphabet, A B C on down through Z. Now clearly this order in the plot may be the order

of presentation in the finished story; the A B C plan is in fact that by which the events of the action are marshalled most directly and naturally. It is sometimes called the chronological order, since each successive incident or relation precedes the next in point of time, as A precedes B, B precedes C, and so on. It may be described also as the plot progressing from cause to effect. "The Mark of the Beast," "The Monkey's Paw," "The Coward," "The Father," "The Gioconda Smile," and "The Secret Sharer" among a host of stories exemplify this straightforward or chronological series.[1] Let us designate this type by the Roman I.

Variants of this complete series, the chronological order, are of three kinds.

1. The plot which omits and nowhere supplies the first links.

Keeping to the illustrations, let us say the story may omit A B C D E F G, may take up the plot at H, and continue through Z. "The Cask of Amontillado" is an example. It progresses chronologically, but confines its action to the revenge Montresor took after suffering the thousand injuries and the insult at the hands of Fortunato. What they were, specifically, Poe leaves to the reader. In beginning the series at the point of dramatic reverse, he enters at once upon the downward action which results in a change of fortunes. Stories constructed on such a beheaded series resemble the Greek drama, which in its structure has been compared to the last act of a modern play. Complete in itself, therefore,

[1] Review the series in "The Mark of the Beast," above.

the story may be regarded as built on a new plot series which begins at H and extends through Z. Two recent stories of the same plot order are Willa Cather's "The Sculptor's Funeral," and Conrad Aiken's "Spider, Spider."

2. The plot from which the middle links have been omitted. The action may use A B C D E, may omit F G H I J K L M N, and taking up the chain at O, continue through Z. Now, these missing links, like those in 1, may be supplied with ease by the reader. For example, in "Extra! Extra!" at the point G, let us say, Roy Whidden goes downstairs, "and it was raining hard, outside." H I J K L M N O P Q R S T (representing a period of twelve years) are omitted, and the story picks up at U, when Whidden reappears. The reader easily fills in the omission so far as it is needed for the story. But the omissions in other stories may not be supplied surely. For example, in "The Pasha's Garden" something occurred which is left to the reader's interpretation. The Pasha's wife refused to give up the key to a chest in the harem room wherein she had been spending the afternoon. At the information of a servant who implied that she had received a visitor, the pasha's long inheritance of Oriental feeling surged over him, and without opening the chest—the key of which his wife had finally surrendered—he dug for it a hole and with the assistance of the servant buried it. Had a visitor concealed himself in the chest? Or had he escaped? The author purposefully omits to inform the reader, an omission which strengthens the effect of the story by the mystery it produces.

3. The plot from which the final links have been cut off.

The story which begins at A may run straight to X and there end. Such a story leaves the dénouement to the reader's judgment as influenced by the facts so far presented. The classic exemplar of this division is "The Lady or the Tiger?" A recent example is "The Killers." The dividing line between such stories and "The Pasha's Garden" is finely drawn. In the latter the action is finished; what is done is done, but the reader is uncertain. In "The Lady or the Tiger?" the action is really incomplete, and the reader finishes it. If the author had somehow informed us what the right door concealed, we should have been able to complete the story for ourselves without argument or without much exercise of the imagination.[2]

[2] The term, "problem plot," has been used loosely to indicate either of two types; first, that in which, as in "The Lady or the Tiger?" and "The Pasha's Garden," some broken train of action is set forth for the reader to finish; second, that in which some problem usually of a moral nature is set forth, stated and solved. The latter is well illustrated in Edith Wharton's "Souls Belated." Lydia Tillotson, having left her husband for Ralph Gannett, learns in Europe that Tillotson has divorced her. At first determined not to be married to Gannett, because she does not wish to burden him with the relation she has not contemplated, she resists his proposals. At length, her awakened soul sees that marriage will not ethically undo the mistake; but her sense of convention also reveals to her a need for the marriage tie. To break the bond, she meditates escape; but convention is too strong for her and she remains with Gannett, to whom, supposedly, she will be married. Here then is the general ethical problem and the particular solution.

Justus Miles Forman in his "Greater Love——" sets forth this question, Shall a man useful to society give up his life to save that of a useless member? He answers it in such manner as to leave the reader questioning rather than satisfied. But the particular plot is complete from beginning to end. Katherine Fullerton Gerould has asked and answered the same question in "The Knight's Move."

"The Pasha's Garden" is a sort of mystery, and therefore is not unlike the class of so-called mystery stories. But there is more than mere absence of something from the plot series in "The Ghost," "The Upper Berth," "The Shadows on the Wall," and "At the End of the Passage." In these, mystery is also bound up in the phenomenon or appearance.

II The second important order of presentation, the reverse of the chronological or A B C order, is termed by some critics the logical order. This special use of "logical" merely suggests the rational processes by which cause is deduced from effect. All good plots are logical, in the inclusive sense. The alphabet still serving to illustrate, this second class may be termed the Z Y X plot. It is the plot principle of the detective story, first used in "The Purloined Letter" and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." The Sherlock Holmes stories, the Craig Kennedy stories, and countless inferior others apply the general principle first used by Poe.

If, now, reversal operates to produce a type of story distinct from that of the A B C order, then a combination of the two main methods should produce stories having characteristics common to each. And this is precisely what we find.

III. 1. A step, or number of steps, may be omitted from the regular order, then placed after the final step or climax of action. The author begins A B C D, etc., and runs to M, let us say; then he omits M N O P, takes up the story perhaps at Q and continues through Z. Then he adds the omitted letter or letters. Since "Marjorie Daw,"[3] there have been many instances of the story built on this plot arrangement, which to-day is

[3] As the term "problem plot" is a source of confusion, so is "hoax plot." "Marjorie Daw" exemplifies the story which by its plot arrangement hoaxes the reader as well as a character in the story. But a hoax may be made the basis of a plot which is free of intention to "sell" the reader. For example, O. Henry's "Pimienta Pancakes" offers whimsical development of a hoax: A says to B, "I wish to get from C a recipe for making pancakes. Please help me." But A also says to C, "B is insane on the subject of pancakes. He was injured on the head while pancakes were being cooked and when excited he is a bit 'off.'" The use of a novel point of view (see following chapter) "makes" the story.

still a popular method of presentation. In "The Necklace" only one fact is left out, the fetching forward of which in the final sentence creates the surprise. O. Henry's "A Double-Dyed Deceiver" also omits only one small detail, which emerges for the terminal surprise.[4] Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Blue Murder" by concealing the fact that Blue Murder never had been shod, and by ending on this fact, implies proof strong as holy writ that Camden had murdered his two brothers—and those murders had also been concealed within the structure of the tale. A. E. Coppard's "The Funnel," reprinted by John Cournos, in "The Fifteen Finest Short Stories," by withholding two details winds up on a double surprise. The author leaves until near the end the fact that a mercantile marine had figured in Bridget's life: the revelation startles the reader who, in addition, learns further that after the husband of the late Bridget "took a ticket to the deuce knows where, and was never seen or heard of again," he proved to have been too hasty, "for if he had stayed but a few days longer he would have learned that the purser had been drowned in the sea some little time before."

2. A step or number of steps may be placed out of order within the series. The author may begin with G H I J, and then revert to A B C D E F; having made the circuit to J, he takes up the order at K and perhaps continues through S. Then he may skip to X Y Z, after which he may add T U V W by way of final explanation. Obviously, the possible combinations are numberless, and this method in general is the one most often employed. "A New England Nun" is a

[4] See Further, Chapter XIV.

classic example of the story which begins *in medias res,* running straight along for a brief period, then reverting to past time, after which the order is regular to the end. A more recent instance is "The Fourth Man," in which after presenting the raft and the four men aboard, the author reverts to the antecedent circumstances and continues straight to the end—an end explaining (by tucking in the point earlier omitted) how the fourth man had prepared his water supply.

The main purposes of omissions are

a. for economy,

b. for creating a sense of mystery,

Or for a combination of these ends.

The main purposes of inversions are

a. for concentrating the elements of plot,

b. for unifying the elements of time and place,

c. for creating surprise.

Now to examine further the distinguished member of the reversed plot family, let us consider the detective story. It is frequently found in conjunction with high literary merit, its construction demands inventive ability, logic and care in adjustment; and its composition for those who need exercise in plot making is invaluable. Young writers are familiar with the idea that the detective story plot is but apparently a *tour de force* in deductive reasoning; they know that the author first carefully builds up his complication and, having arrived at the dénouement, then reverses his process. That is, they understand dimly that the author begins with his original dénouement or perhaps a point just preceding the dénouement, and so far as the reader is concerned works from effect back to cause. For students who would learn to

write detective stories, more than this general knowledge is essential. To those who have followed the tabulation and discussion of plot forms given above, I recommend study of the Sherlock Holmes narratives. As a working model, I shall choose "The Red-Headed League," perhaps the best known of all, and show its synthesis.[5]

This study we shall make under three topics

1. The building of the plot.
2. What Sherlock Holmes knows.
3. The presentation to the reader.

1. In building the plot, the author makes use of a main line of interest and a secondary line. The two probably started quite independently of each other, and the secondary line may have presented itself first; but for the sake of convenience we shall assume that the main line first appeared. The germinal idea was probably the author's knowledge that a bank robbery had been committed by thieves who effected by means of a tunnel an entrance to certain bank vaults.[6] Or the author might have passed a shop near a bank and conceived the idea of an underground passage to the vaults. The essential point to keep in mind is that the author starts with the fact which ultimately emerges as the seeming discovery. Not to take too much for granted let us assume that the author built the plan on his own hypothesis.

One of the first questions to arise would naturally be,

[5] Published in "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes"; in "Warner's Library of the World's Best Literature"; in Julian Hawthorne's "Library of Mystery and Detective Stories." See bibliography.

[6] This part of the story might well have been found already elaborated; that is, the author may have heard the full details of a crime similar to that occurring twenty years later in New York City. In Maiden Lane a daring diamond robbery was made in almost identically the manner Sir Conan here describes.

Who could build a tunnel from the shop to the bank, or How can a tunnel be built? Only by some person or persons having access to the shop. The proprietor might serve, or a clerk or assistant. A desperate character might secure engagement as clerk to the owner. Then, in that case, the second question arises, How can the villain contrive to dig a tunnel without exciting the suspicions of the employer? Obviously he must get rid of the employer altogether, for a time, or for part of the time each day. The disappearance of the owner might have the undesirable effect of nipping the scheme in the bud. Why not send him on a journey? This plan might have been used. If so the second line of interest would probably have offered just as unusual and bizarre features as the one chosen. But the author decided to get rid of the proprietor for a certain time each day.

At this point, then, the second thread of interest enters. The employer will be given a unique piece of work, one the novelty of which will later engage the reader's uppermost interest.

Keep in mind, too, that at some time or other the author possibly had clipped just such a newspaper notice and treasured it against later need. This clipping, then, is the starting point of the subordinate thread:

To the Red-Headed League: On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins of Lebanon, Pa., U. S. A., there is now another vacancy open, which entitled a member of the League to a salary of four pounds a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind, and above the age of twenty-one years are eligible. Apply in person on Monday at 11

o'clock to Duncan Ross at the offices of the League, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet Street.

The author makes his shopkeeper the possessor of a red head, and by so doing roughly completes his possibility for complication. The robber-clerk will insert this notice in one of the London dailies, will read the notice later to his employer, and ultimately will succeed in making his employer the "successful competitor" for a position that takes him away from the shop for a number of hours every day. He will build the tunnel and rob the bank.

Now some detective stories show an unwinding for the purpose of explaining how a striking crime has been perpetrated. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" solves the mystery of two deaths; Arthur Reeve's "The Absolute Zero" solves the mystery of two deaths; Melville Davisson Post's "The Doomdorf Mystery" solves the mystery of one death, and his "The Corpus Delicti" the mystery of one death followed by the disposition of the body. The A B C plot has been reversed. But other detective stories show how a crime might have been committed. The A B C plot is not fully reversed. So here the author decided not to allow the robbery; he prevented the dénouement as originally conceived.[7]

How, now, will the robbery be forestalled? The author conceived the idea of unwinding the complication by a skilful pull at the subordinate thread; in short, he will make the proprietor of the shop the leading figure in what must appear to the reader to be the main thread

[7] His chief reason is of course that after the criminals made their escape with the gold, the tunnel would have stood revealed and with it all the complication.

of interest. Because the tunnel has been built and the moment is ripe for action, the thief or thieves will give notice that the League is dissolved; and because he has lost his job, Jabez Wilson will go to Sherlock Holmes about it. Observe the weak point: the robbers would not have suggested the dissolution of the League. They would have made sure the proprietor was still out of the way. And further, a man losing a unique sort of occupation about which he had been advised by his assistant would hardly run at once to a prominent detective. But if the weakness were not existent, there would be no story. Finally for the reader, the defect is cleverly concealed.

2. What Sherlock Holmes knows. Let us regard him as a real detective, to whom the author will give only certain facts, namely those in the possession of the pawnbroker. The only reason for transferring them from Jabez Wilson to Sherlock Holmes is that the former is stupid and the latter is clever. The pawnbroker relates that he keeps a shop with a single assistant. About a month after engaging this young man's services, the pawnbroker has been employed outside the shop a certain number of hours each day. This morning the employment had abruptly terminated, and under peculiar conditions. Provoked at the loss of his position, he has sought out Sherlock Holmes to solve the mystery of its sudden ending. He reads the advertisement, tells the story of his election to the Red Headed League, and incidentally of his assistant's part in the election. In the rough, this is all the detective knows. But in detail, he apprehends much more. The way in which the author shows the detective's ability may fittingly be included under

3. The presentation to the reader. First, then, the detective is not the best person to narrate the events. He would have to tell too much; he would seem too egotistic. The chronicler may fittingly be one who admires the detective, who serves as a foil to his brilliancy, and who is always ready to act at need. Dr. Watson, the confident, becomes involved, as a minor character, in most of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

In a matter-of-fact style, then, Dr. Watson begins at the beginning: "I had called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, one day in the autumn of last year, and found him in deep conversation with a very stout, florid-faced, elderly gentleman with fiery red hair." The apparent key-note struck in "red hair," and emphasised a trifle later, starts the reader off on the wrong trail.

The author here takes the opportunity of apologising for his bizarre red-headed league idea, and at the same time of impressing upon the reader that truth is stranger than fiction. Versimilitude, a distinct touch of reality, is produced by these words: "You will remember that I remarked the other day just before we went into the very simple problem presented by Miss Mary Sutherland that for strange effects and extraordinary combinations, we must go to life itself, which is always far more daring than any effort of the imagination." By this apology the author further hoodwinks the undiscerning reader.

The pawnbroker, who has just begun his narrative, recommences. The matter he will present will be the exposition, or the antecedent circumstances, of the story to follow. From experience of long-winded expositions, the reader may perhaps fear tediousness. But the author rouses interest even in the exposition by subtly suggest-

ing that the great detective is willing to listen twice to the beginning, that, in short, Holmes thinks the narrative unique.

To break the monotony of the explanation, the author calls upon Sherlock to perform a minor exercise of deduction. By this apparent deduction the description of Wilson is cleverly and unobtrusively given to the reader. Sir Conan conveniently makes him a Freemason, a man who has done manual labour, who has been in China. He might have chosen to give Mr. Wilson any characteristics whatever, except the very pertinent visible effect from the writing. This effect is the significant attribute. A man who has been in China may have been tattooed; he may wear a coin. Manual labour leaves one hand larger than the other. Writing frays the edge of the right cuff. Taking the effects, the detective works back to cause: "Beyond the obvious facts that he has at some time done manual labour . . . that he is a Freemason, that he has been in China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce nothing else."

Part of the "business" in the Sherlock Holmes stories consists in surprising the client by the detective's seeming omniscience, and in having him ask how the detective knows. The detective explains. Then the client, perceiving that the deduction is merely logical, not magical, ceases to admire. The point for the student is that the deduction is only apparent. Sir Conan Doyle planned it; he devised cause before effect; Sherlock *seems* to deduce cause from effect.

After reading the advertisement, Wilson answers questions about his household. Holmes pays close attention

to the details about the young man's employment, his developing pictures in the cellar; he starts at the discovery that the clerk has a white splash of acid upon his forehead, and immediately asks whether his ears are pierced for ear-rings. The reader gasps; he knows that Sherlock has a "clue." Again, the inference appears clever; but it is still to be remembered that Sir Conan, who has chosen his man, is as thoroughly acquainted with one of his characteristics as with another. The average reader wonders at the omniscience of Sherlock, forgetful that the stock figure of the great man has only at the moment the particular manifestation of omniscience which his creator thinks it wise to ascribe to him.

The author takes pains to interest the reader in the account of the leaguer's employment, which he gives in sprightly narrative. In making it difficult for Jabez Wilson to secure the League vacancy the villains had efficaciously hoodwinked him. The situation affords humorous gleams by way of lighting up the story. After Holmes "gets the clue," however—which also becomes one for the reader—there is practically nothing else for the detective to do but to prevent the thief from carrying out whatever designs he may have. If there is time! The author knows the trick of suspense. He holds the solution that the detective must apparently find; but to foster the delusion that the detective actually does the work of probing the mystery, the author permits him to smoke three pipes over the problem. The three-pipe study centers about the questions, What was the assistant doing in the cellar? Why had he got rid of the proprietor? To answer these questions, Sherlock must reconnoitre: he and Watson walk by the pawnbroker's

establishment. When the buildings in the vicinity are enumerated, the Bank branch is skilfully buried in the list so as not to excite the reader's attention to its proximity; for the author is not yet ready to give up the secret. The detective knocks; the clerk comes to the door, gives a direction inquired for, and vanishes. The detective had desired to see his knees.

Having discovered the Bank and the soiled knees of the clerk's trousers, and having found the ground to be hollow-sounding, the detective has confirmed his guess. But the reader does not yet know the solution. For further suspense, the two—Holmes and Watson—are permitted by the author to listen to a concert, Holmes alleging that German music is introspective in its influence. Then Holmes announces that a crime is about to occur, and invites Watson to be present at its prevention.

The dénouement is managed effectively. In the company of the Bank Director, Mr. Merryweather, and Peter Jones of Scotland Yard, the two men set off at ten o'clock in the evening. (The Scotland Yard men are foils to the genius of Holmes, usually derisive of his methods, and chagrined at his success.) As the four journey to the Bank vaults, Watson learns that thirty thousand pounds are at stake. John Clay, murderer, is the criminal. In the business of entering the Bank cellar and waiting, suspense is well maintained. The men watching in the vault capture the criminal clerk; the Scotland Yard men below seize his accomplice. The ending is further enhanced by the royal blood of the villain. Finally, in explanatory fashion, Holmes rehearses to Watson the points which that gentleman as well as the reader may have failed to

apprehend during the course of the narrative. If we summarise the stages of construction, we have

1. A B C down through Z. Sir Conan Doyle's straight plot: A criminal secures a position in a pawnbroker's shop, that he may dig a tunnel from it to the vault of a bank. By getting rid of the proprietor for a stated time each day, he, with an accomplice, will complete the excavation and rob the bank of 30,000 pounds. To repeat:
   A B C, etc., straight, unbroken series through Z. But the author interrupts his series by sending the pawnbroker, about point V, to Sherlock Holmes. (W X Y Z exists only in the mind of the author.)
2. The series as Sherlock Holmes receives it: V (information about the dissolution of the League); then J (a rehearsal of the assistant's calling attention to the advertisement, etc.); then A B and a broken series down to V. The parenthesised letters stand for facts none of the characters know.
   V J A B (C) D (E) F (G) H (I K) L (M N) O (P) Q R S T U.
3. The reader receives all the information Sherlock receives, and those points or facts added by Sherlock's questions, guesses and deductions, so far as Sherlock chooses to let the reader have them. The reader does not know the significance of all the supplied links, nor can he deduce the W X Y Z dénouement, as Sherlock deduces it.
   V J A B (C) D (E) F (G) H (I K) L (M N) O (P) Q R S T U, and then, after U, E I K M P. The reader fails, let us say, to receive C,

which may stand for the fact that Vincent Spaulding is not the actual name of the assistant. G may represent the digging of the tunnel, which is withheld still. These are added or become clear for the reader when he learns W X Y Z. And the plot is complete, as it was for the author originally.

From Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" to S. S. Van Dine's "The Scarab Murder Case," the author of the detective story, short or long, has pursued in general the plan here set forth. In the partial or complete reversal of the plan first constructed, he presents a plot which is marked by the same technique that directs the straight plot and its development—and more.

If the primary purpose of fiction is to entertain, the detective story needs no apology. "What sort of fiction is it that has the most nearly universal appeal?" inquires Melville Post, in "The Blight." His answer is pertinent to this discussion. "If one reflects one will immediately see that the human mind everywhere is engaged almost exclusively with problems. It is the problem that holds the mind with a consuming interest. The astronomer, as Mr. Lowell so aptly puts it, is merely a detective of the heavens; the chemist, a detective of the laboratory; the biologist, a student of clues. We are encircled by a frontier of vast mysteries. We advance by finding the solution to these mysteries." If the "human mind is essentially an implement for the solving of problems and the untangling of mysteries," it would "seem to be true that the writer who presents a problem to be solved or a mystery to be untangled will be offering those qualities

in his fiction which are of the most nearly universal appeal."

The story of such an author will probably depend mainly for its excellence upon the characterisation of his detective, who must be a man of flesh-and-blood—not an automaton—and upon the deception of the reader, who must never feel the backward working process. In short, the author must conceal his mechanism.

I have written at length about plot and its management, with examples of plot processes, because I have found that the student of parts who wishes to learn story writing needs help most of all in plot construction. It is the chief way in which an instructor can be of help; yet, as a fact, it is the way about which most of the books are silent. The older story teller delivered his story directly, in chronological order. The modern story writer must be highly sophisticated to please his sophisticated reader. He must trap attention; he must hold that attention by all the devices known to his art; he must lure the reader on to the climax with just the right suspense; he must elicit the breath of relief, or perhaps the gasp of horror. Although the style, the dress for the plot, counts largely, yet the plot itself, the process in dealing with the larger features, tells for most in his final success or unsuccess. What Aristotle said still holds good: " . . . beginners in the art become proficient in the delineation of personal traits before they are able to combine the incidents of the action into an effective whole. . . ." And in comparing one short-story of action with another, I would make plot comparison a test. As Aristotle said of tragedy: ". . . in pointing out similarities and dif-

ferences in the handling of material, the fairest way is to take the plot as a basis of criticism."

It has been asserted that the modern American story is machine-made. It has been urged that the Russian stories, for example, are refreshing after our turned-out-to-order short-story. If, however, the American story reveals itself as machine-made, it is merely a bad story; the mechanism has not been sufficiently concealed. Perhaps in the particular example the breath of life is lacking. The stories of Shekhov and Andreyev are undoubtedly refreshing for their "difference," their vigour and their abundance of realistic detail; but they are not, usually, to be preferred for form. Read Chekhov's "The Black Monk," or "The Kiss," or "Verotchka," and analyse your feeling of dissatisfaction at the close. The story in each of these trails off; it is unfinished. Chekhov was right about his fiction when he said (1888), "and so what I produce is not literature, but something like the patching of Trishka's coat."[8] He recognized that in planning a story one is bound to think first about its framework, that from a crowd of characters one selects one person only, puts him on the canvas, making him prominent, while he scatters the others about like small coin. The result "is something like the vault of heaven: one big moon and a number of very small stars around it. But the moon is not a success because it can only be understood if the stars too are intelligible, and the stars are not worked out." It is true that he wrote, later, stories more satisfactory to himself, as to others; even so, the upholder of the Russian tale or its American

[8] Letters of Anton Chekhov, Translated by Constance Garnett, Macmillan Company, New York, 1920. Pp. 101, 102.

derivative makes out no case against the American technician. The technician might do better if he had, let us say, more power; the Russian certainly could not be the worse in a number of stories for more technique. The person with no instinct for plot may yet have something to say if he can master the instrument.

The student is strongly recommended to construct many plots, even though most of them may be good only for throwing away. Is there any value in developing a story on a framework which will not support the material laid over it?[9] The mechanical means of plot development here set forth—that of finding a struggle or obstacle in one line of interest and effecting with the line a complication through a subordinate line of interest—is one which any student can learn. And, above all, plot is mechanical. It is in no sense to be confused with the ultimate presentation of the story.

TABLE ILLUSTRATING ORDERS OF PLOT PRESENTATION:

I

The chronological or alphabet order.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Example, "The Mark of the Beast."

Variants:

1. (A B C D E F G) H . . . Z.

Example, "The Cask of Amontillado."

[9] It should be repeated, however, that some authors write sequentially; that is, that they develop plot as they develop the story. This method is perhaps the "natural" method; it is the one likely to be chosen by students who have a gift for telling stories. But it is also, unfortunately, the one too often chosen by him who has only a small plot gift, and who finds the sequence not forthcoming.

2. A B C D E (F . . . N) O . . . Z.
   Examples, (a) for economy: "Extra! Extra!"; (b) for mystery: "The Pasha's Garden."
3. A B C D E F . . . to X (Y Z).
   Examples, "The Lady or the Tiger?" "The Killers."

II

The "logical" or reversed alphabet order.
Z Y X W V U . . . A.
The general method of presenting detective story plots. Pure type rarely found.

III

The mixed order. Various combinations possible. As,

1. A B C D . . . (M N O P) Q . . . Z M N O P. For surprise. *Examples,* "Marjorie Daw," "The Necklace," "A Double-Dyed Deceiver," "Blue Murder," "The Funnel."
2. (A B C D E F) G H I J A B C D E F K L M N . . . Z. For concentration of time and place. *Examples,* "A New England Nun," "The Fourth Man."
3. (A B C D E F) G H I J K L M N . . . S (T U V W) X Y Z T U V W. For concentration of time and place and for surprise. *Example,* "The Hypotheses of Failure."

Note: Parentheses include letters representing a fact or facts omitted. If supplied later, they are shown without parentheses.

Exercises for Chapter VI

Select a number of stories from previous lists, and compare the presentation of plot with the (a) chronologi-

cal series of plot events, (b) the probable development by the author.

What is the explanation of the surprise in the earlier pages of Conrad's "The Brute"? in the final paragraphs of Shane Leslie's "The Hospital Nurse"?

With what fact is it clear Melville Davisson Post began his construction of "The Doomdorf Mystery"? Write out the chronological plot order of events of this story.

Read the following ballad, which is three or four hundred years old:

BABYLON; OR THE BONNIE BANKS O FORDIE

1. There were three ladies lived in a bower,
   Eh vow bonnie,
   And they went out to pull a flower
   On the bonnie banks o fordie.
2. They hadna pu'ed a flower but ane,
   When up started to them a banisht man.
3. He's ta'en the first sister by the hand,
   And he's turned her round and made her stand.
4. "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
   Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"
5. "It's I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
   But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife."
6. He's killed this may, and he's laid her by,
   For to bear the red rose company.
7. He's ta'en the second ane by the hand,
   And he's turned her round and made her stand.
8. "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
   Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"
9. "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
   But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife."
10. He's killed this may, and he's laid her by,

For to bear the red rose company.
11. He's taken the youngest ane by the hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.
12. Says, "Will ye be a rank robber's wife.
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"
13. "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
Nor will I die by your wee pen-knife.
14. "For I hae a brother in this wood,
And gin ye kill me, it's he'll kill thee."
15. "What's thy brother's name? Come tell to me."
"My brother's name is Baby Lon."
16. "O sister, sister, what have I done!
O have I done this ill to thee!
17. "O since I've done this evil deed,
Good sall never be seen o me."
18. He's taken out his wee pen-knife,
And he's twyned himsel o his ain sweet life.

What conclusions do you draw about the antiquity and the popularity of the surprise ending?

Read R. Austin Freeman's "The Pathologist to the Rescue," and ask yourself, "With what pathological fact did the author begin to construct this story?" What chronological order of events did he have in mind before presenting the story? Observe what the detective, Dr. Thorndyke, received by way of information. Observe how the author lets him make his deductions which, of course, are only apparent. What is the purpose of the complication (or the love interest)?

Read H. C. Bailey's "The Little House." What are the elements in this "Mr. Fortune" story that draw the reader's sympathy? If you have read other stories in which this detective takes a hand, what deductions can you make about his interests?

On what management does the success of Henry Syd-

nor Harrison's "Miss Hinch" depend? At what point did you first know which of the two characters was the criminal?

Willard Huntington Wright observes in the Introduction to "The Great Detective Stories" that the fashions and inventions of yesterday are no longer used except by the inept and uninformed author. He mentions as "relegated to the discard": the finding of a distinctive cigarette or cigar at the scene of the crime; the murdering of a man in a locked room after the police have broken in; the commission of the murder by an animal; the shooting of a dagger from a gun or other projecting machine to avoid proximity; tracing the crime to the detective himself. Can you recall stories, old or new, in which these devices have been used?

CHAPTER VII

THE POINT OF VIEW

Whose story is the one to tell? Who shall tell it? Author may do so dramatically (in form), dramatically (in effect, only); the meaning of objectivity; examples; note on omniscience; first person narrator; may be a major character; examples; angle of major character; examples; may be a minor character; examples; angle of minor character; examples; the impersonal "I" narrator; examples; Kipling's double use of "I"; comparison between first and third persons as means to draw credulity; omniscience of author and its relation to point of view; examples of shifts; reasons for confusion of student over "angle" and "point of view"; "spot-light" character *vs.* character over whom the "X-ray" method is exercised; reasons for selecting and adhering to one point of view; occasions for shifting examples; problem of shaping material determined by the point of view.

THE writer, as he shapes his story, constantly faces manifold problems. At first thought, it might appear that selection of necessary and effective detail would be the prime consideration; the extrication of the one story from adventitious matter. "How much of this substance is 'incompetent, irrelevant and immaterial'?" he must ask before he is ready to "lay a scene and launch a drama." To answer, he must ask further, "Whose story is this, anyway?" A mark of the seasoned author is the recognition of various facets of the story, with a scanning of their possibilities which the tyro fails too often to regard as necessary.

Obviously, there are as many possible stories as there are characters in the action. But whose is the unique

story, or the one to win the reader by gaining his sympathy or exciting his admiration? In "The Sire de Maletroit's Door," it is Denis's; in "The Maltese Cat," it is the pony's; in "A Tragedy in Little," it is the father's; in "The Most Dangerous Game," it is Rainsford's; in "Big Blonde," it is the big blonde's; in "The Parrot," it is the American's; in "One Crowded Hour," it is the story of Lucia Viles. The writer should be convinced that he is sure of the character to whom, out of all possible choices, the story really belongs. After he has settled this problem to his satisfaction, he must face another of usually greater difficulty, "Who will be the narrator?[1]

Shall the author tell the story? He may do so, 1. dramatically, or objectively, through the characters in their appropriate places on the stage of action, his own part being that of a faithful recorder of the drama. He may do so, 2. still as the all-observant on-looker, and camera-like recorder, in straight narrative, which though it may be dramatic enough in effect has nothing or little of dramatic form. Or, he may combine divisions 1 and 2 of this so-called objective method, angle, or point of view. The objective method and its advantages are summed up, as follows, in a passage from De Maupassant's "The Novel":

"The partisans of objectivity (what an odious word!) profess . . . to give us an exact representation of what

[1] In "The Hand of Jim Fane," Katherine Fullerton Gerould expresses her recognition and settling of the two questions: "This, by the way, is Carrie Fane's story; rescued from misunderstanding and oblivion by Rayburn; told, tepidly, by me. I am a kind of Boswell to Rayburn."

takes place in life; they carefully avoid all complicated explanations and all dissertations on motives, and limit themselves to placing before our eyes personages and events. In their view psychology ought to be concealed in a book, as it is concealed, in reality, beneath the facts of existence.

"Novels conceived on this plan gain thereby in interest, in action, in colour, and in stirring life."

Björnson wrote "The Father," which is almost pure drama, from the objective angle; Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers" is told from the same angle; W. R. Burnett's "Round Trip" and "Dressing-Up" are more recent instances. 1 and 2. Thomas Hardy's "The Three Strangers" exemplifies in combination the two divisions of the one method, the proportion of drama and straight narrative being well balanced. Kipling's "Sea Constables" is another example; and Henry Sydnor Harrison's "Miss Hinch" owes its success, in a measure, to this combination of drama and straight narrative. If in "Miss Hinch" the mental operations of either the poor old woman or of the clergyman were revealed, the secret of both personalities would be given away.

The author also may tell the story with an exercise of omniscience as well as powers of observation; he may enter the minds of his characters (only one mind, preferably, in the short story), and may follow the mental processes as well as the outward behavior. This procedure has become increasingly popular since the advent of the "stream of consciousness" novel which, defined in other words, is only a fiction writen from a single point of view—that of one character. This general method of

omniscience, then, is bound up with that of narration from the point of view of one character. Let us survey the preliminary possibilities.

The story may be told by the main character, in the first person, and is so told by many writers from Poe to Sherwood Anderson. By the one may be recalled "The Cask of Amontillado," "Berenice," "Ligeia," "William Wilson," "The Tell-tale Heart," and "The Manuscript Found in a Bottle." By the other, "I'm a Fool," "I Want to Know Why," "Alice," "The Triumph of the Egg," and "Brothers." Struthers Burt once expressed the advantages of the "I" narrator, as follows: "First, it does away with the 'Smart Alec' omniscient atmosphere of the third person, which seems to me the bane of most American short stories—the author gives an impression of groping for his story, just as a person in real life gropes when he narrates an incident. Conrad does this, and does it so beautifully. It seems to me that a 'thickness' is achieved that can be got in no other way. This, of course, does not apply to a novel, because in a novel the thickness is achieved by mere length. Secondly, as you say, it enables one to handle surprise more readily. Thirdly, the story can be told in colloquial language, which makes it, so it seems to me, more poignant. Finally, and this is not paradoxical, despite the colloquial language, one has a slight feeling of aloofness from the characters or sees them through the medium of a third person; and this, it seems to me, is the way one sees things in real life."

If there are objections to this choice of narrator; if, for instance, the chief character is to meet death in some tragic manner, or if he is miraculously to escape death,

there are advantages in the use of the author narrator who tells the story in the third person as if from the shoulder or through the mind of the main character.[2] The angle of narration is the same, though the author writes in the third person, as it is when the character speaks in the first person; the difference is only one of grammatical form. Sherwood Anderson uses this third person narrator in the following stories: "Another Wife," "The Return," and "An Awakening," in all of which the tone and spirit are the same as in the first person stories mentioned above. In reflecting upon Anderson's narratives, one will find it difficult to remember the person in which they are told; he uses the first and third persons with, apparently, no gain and no loss in using now the first, now the third. He does gain much for his purpose by maintaining this point of view—the same point of view for both persons. Donn Byrne's "Biplane No. 2," however, is a story that would be spoiled if told by the hero, who makes an ascent in his plane and while studying the operations of the enemy is forced to descend because of damage done the plane by that enemy. Shall he volplane or turn the machine over? He decides upon the latter course, and falls to certain death. The angle or point of view of Stanton is the only one to be preferred; but he should not be made the narrator, could not become the narrator, unless a shift, or trick device—which might destroy the tragic effect—were employed in the dénouement.

[1] Poe escapes with his "Manuscript Found in a Bottle" by the trick indicated in the title. The story was thrust into the bottle as the writer went down with the vessel—otherwise it would have been lost. Similar devices may permit the use of the first person in the circumstances suggested; but the effect is usually one of trickiness.

A minor character may tell the narrative in the first person; or the story may be told by the author as if from the shoulder of the minor character, the angle again being the same as though the character himself were writing. Katherine Fullerton Gerould employs the minor first person narrator successfully in "On the Staircase," "Impasse," and "The Wax Doll." Henry James uses it in "The Real Thing." Edith Wharton tells "The Triumph of Night" in the third person, but as surely from the point of view of George Faxon as if he were writing it in the first. "One Crowded Hour,' by Ben Ames Williams, is told from the point of view of Jeff Ranney, on whose life the story of the main character (Lucia Viles) impinged at a moment climactic for her. Isabel Hopestill Carter's "The Old Woman" consists almost wholly of a memory—the old woman's—told in the third person, with all the effect of the first person narrative. Is she the major or a minor character in that story? Richard Middleton's "A Tragedy in Little" is 'made' by the choice of the little boy's angle. The facts in the time-worn framework are that a post office clerk has taken money, has at first attempted to escape, and has returned to give himself up. The author converts the plot into a thing of novelty by presenting the incidents as they appeared to the clerk's little boy. The following passage represents the effectiveness of this point of view:

"Suddenly mother straightened herself, and Jack looked up and saw his father leaning over the gate. He seemed to be making grimaces, and Jack made haste to laugh aloud in the empty room, because he knew that he

was good at seeing his father's jokes. Indeed, it was a funny thing that father should come home early from work and make faces at mother from the road. Mother, too, was willing to join in the fun, for she knelt down among the wet flowers, and as her head drooped lower and lower it looked, for one ecstatic moment, as though she were going to turn head over heels. But she lay quite still on the ground, and father came half way through the gate, and then turned and ran off down the hill towards the station."

Rose Wilder Lane's "Innocence," whether it be regarded as the child's story or the story of her elders, owes its extraordinary force and poignancy to the use of Mary Alice's point of view. The series of events, dimly apprehended by her, strikes the reader dumb with horror relieved only by the final sentence, "But Mary Alice slipped away from all vague wonderings into the coziness of sleep."

There is yet another first person narrator, the inactive, reporting "I," who merely gathers snatches of the story, or who merely repeats what he learns from the various characters; he has no part in the essential drama. He is, therefore, not a minor character, though his may approach that rôle. Neither is his point of view interchangeable with that of the all-observant third person. To illustrate, Katherine Fullerton Gerould's "Vain Oblations" is told by one who comments:

"What I have to tell I got partly from my own observation, partly from a good little woman at the Mission, partly from Saxe's letters, largely from his own lips, and partly from the natives. . . . It has taken me three years of steady staring to see the thing whole."

Kipling is expert in combining two "I" uses in the same story, so as to gain credulity. "The Man Who Would be King" is told in the first person, as if by a reporter, Kipling himself. Becoming interested in the fortunes of Peachey Carnahan and Daniel Dravot, he draws the reader along with him. After the two men disappear into the interior, "I," supposedly Kipling, hears nothing from them for some months.[3] Then Peachey Carnahan returns. He rehearses the story of the drama enacted during those months by Dravot and himself (the minor character) with the natives, and of Dravot's consequent downfall and death. The second use of "I" is one of the best, as used by Kipling. Here it is as if the teller, Carnahan, said, "I know all these facts are grotesque; but take my word for it; I experienced 'em." In using the first person narrator, also, for the husk of the story, Kipling has cunningly doubled the effect on the reader. "I, Kipling, vouch for these things; Peachey told me while I held his poor, mad eyes. . . ." Thus the improbable story of Daniel Dravot owes its plausibility to the fact that it is related by one who was with him to one who passes it to the reader. "The Courting of Dinah Shadd" and "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney" show similar double "I" uses. "Wireless," "They," and "The House Surgeon" represent the reporting "I" as drawn into the realm of the extraordinary and becoming a participant, a minor character, in the strange adventures that happen there. In "The Man's Story," Sherwood Anderson's "I" is a reporting "I"—"As I picked the story up the sense of it was something like this—"

[3] Incidentally, this fact illustrates adherence to point of view; the first person reports only what he as the first person knows; the reader progresses only through the medium of the first person.

For inducing belief in the supernatural, the third person narrative offers a peculiar advantage. In the old-fashioned ghost story the author gave his word (in the first person) that he had seen a spectre and he thereby obtained either the reader's credulity or the suspicion that he was obsessed, suffering from hallucination. Later, the ghost story was told in the third person, with the result of greater conviction; for even the uncritical reader had come to feel the first person only an outworn convention. A few *tour de force* instances represent the ghost telling the story (first person); for example, Olivia Howard Dunbar's "The Shell of Sense," and Richard Middleton's "On the Brighton Road." These "I" uses are in most stories employed for surprise, as in the second just mentioned: "I died at Crawley this morning," said the boy. On these words the story ends.

Now let us revert to the omniscience of the author. If he indicates what passes *in the mind of a character* he declares himself all-knowing, as familiar with the mental process of a person as is that person himself. If the method of narration is otherwise objective, dramatic, and the author turns momentarily to this subjective, analytic method, just so far he shifts the angle to that of the person under analysis. The shift, however, may be so slight as to pass unnoticed in the prevailing method. In De Maupassant's "Piece of String," which is told, in the main objectively, occurs this sentence, "Maître Hauchecorne, economical, like all true Normans, reflected that everything was worth picking up which could be of any use. . . ." The *reflection* here is an instance of omniscience on the author's part. The *act* of picking up the piece of string is dramatic and its recountal needs

only the all-observant point of view. The mental and the physical are neatly joined. John Russell's "The Fourth Man," told for the greater part objectively, here and there shifts to Dr. Dubosc's point of view; for example, "—he began to regret his intervention in the knife play."

Now turn to a number of stories which instance the combination of objective and analytic methods, and observe that the author's omniscience focused upon a character results in shifting to the point of view of that character. "A Tragedy in Little," "Biplane No. 2," and "Innocence" have been cited as narratives presented from the point of view of one character. Virginia Woolf's "The New Dress," Roark Bradford's "River Witch," and Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Bubbles" are recent instances of the same presentation. In each of these stories the author knows the mental behaviour of his character as well as the physical behaviour, and adheres perfectly to the single point of view of the chosen character. In other stories, the author may shift to a method wholly objective and yet, by reverting to the mind of the character selected, maintain in general the point of view of that character. Henry James's "The Tree of Knowledge" reveals in the first paragraph omniscience exercised over one mind: "It was one of the secret opinions, such as we all have, of Peter Brench that his main success in life consisted in his never having committed himself about the work, as it was called, of his friend, Morgan Mallow." The reader unconsciously grasps that the story will be told from the angle of Peter, the word "secret" being mainly responsible for this apprehension. As a fact, the story here and there expands into scenes which

taken out of the context are purely objective; but the point of view with which the author begins is the one from which the story is told as a whole. "The Real Right Thing" is similarly presented. George Withermore's angle is employed with scarcely noticeable shifts to the pure objective; the point of view, in effect, is that of Withermore. On the other hand, "Never in This World," by Stephen Morehouse Avery, tells in the main objectively the brief story of Susan Dodd. After the first paragraph, Susan "watches" the approach of a boy; in the fourth paragraph, the boy's thoughts are invaded; the story progresses objectively, pausing a moment on Paul Dodd's mind—"blamed himself, for he had bungled—" and reverting to Susan's: "When she opened her eyes and sat up again, she could hardly believe it." The close indicates Paul's point of view: he sees the small boy with which the story began. Throughout, every shift throws more light on the little girl, the central character, a legitimate shift by which the unifying purpose is strengthened.

Confusion in understanding the operation of the point of view is explainable in part on the ground that so few stories are told from an absolutely constant point of view, although the advice usually offered to the tyro is adherence to the one chosen. Seeing an author shift without consequent strain or jerk on the reader's attention, the reader thinks he himself has mistaken the whole meaning and procedure of this technical aid to unity. Arnold Bennett's "The Idiot" almost perfectly adheres to the dramatic or objective presentation. In the first paragraph only is there any delving into the mind of William Froyle: "He had recognised the hand-writing

of the envelope, and the recognition of it gave form and quick life to all the vague suspicions that had troubled him some months before, and again during the last few days." Here the author probes Froyle's consciousness, yet in the remainder of the story he leaves that consciousness alone. The shift to the wholly external is slight; yet the beginning is an unnecessarily false leader to the plan followed thereafter.

We may use this story to illustrate also another pardonable cause of confusion. It is that arising from a phase of the objective method, which emphasises one character, in combination with the method whereby the angle of a character is used. To understand the difference, let us turn to the stage. A, let us say, is the hero; the spot-light is on him; yet the drama is presented objectively. So William Froyle, from the first paragraph on, is under the spot-light; but the story is told objectively, not from his angle. The more nearly a reader identifies himself *with* a particular character, the more likely he will be to see and feel the drama from the angle of the character; in proportion as he looks *upon* the character, the more perfectly has the author succeeded in writing objectively with the spot-light on that character.

Now if the writer does well to choose a definite angle of narration or point of view, when should he, having chosen it, leave it for another angle? And why should he leave it for another angle? Adherence to the chosen point of view means a unity of effect and a corresponding strength of impression. Shift only to gain something greater than is lost through shifting; unless some reason underlies the intended change, keep to the angle chosen. Further, a slight shift may be made with less of strain

on the reader's attention than a decided shift. For example, the change noticed in "Never in This World" is easy, natural; unity is maintained, no jar results for the reader. A turning from the wholly objective to the wholly subjective method may not only cause a jolt with diminution of interest, but may cause confusion. "Life of Ma Parker," for example, shifts overmuch for the reader's ease. In addition to exercising omniscience over the mind of Ma Parker, who is the "spot-light" character, Katherine Mansfield reverts to the past, without warning, through the mind of Ma. One must read the story twice to be sure of the sequence throughout. Ivan Bunin's "The Gentleman from San Francisco" leaps from mind to mind, fact to fact, worrying the reader into asking, "What is it all about?" To be sure, the reader knows in the end that the author's purpose is to illustrate the homily of death in the midst of life; to be sure, he chooses a modern instance to illustrate the thesis; equally, to be sure, he uses a bludgeon to annihilate a gnat, however impressive the exhibition of power.

In the novel, the author may shift as much as he pleases: the larger plan admits, even demands, larger unification; in its roominess is space for much denied to the smaller compass of the short story. If the "Life of Ma Parker" were elaborated, it might easily become a novel wherein the changing points of view would but aid in reflecting the lives of all the characters. Even in the novel, however, extreme shifts annoy the reader. Frank Swinnerton's "Nocturne" progresses perfectly and adequately from a single point of view almost to the close, shifts without necessity, and shatters the ideal consciously or unconsciously maintained so far by the author, con-

sciously or unconsciously shared by the reader. In the older novel, "Bleak House," Esther Summerson talks for a chapter or two, then Dickens takes up the narrative from the point of view of the omniscient and all-observant author. On picking up the thread which has been interrupted, the reader may find that he has forgotten the preceding incidents of that thread. From the time of Henry James, who experimented with the many points of view possible and usually confined himself to one in a given work, writers have not been slow to recognize the advantages of following, throughout, either the objective method or the exercise of omniscience over the mind of one character. James Joyce's "Ulysses" in creating an odyssey from one day in a man's life recently has caused a renascence of story telling through a single man or woman and deluged the world in streams of consciousness. . . .

The trained story-writer, then, carefully chooses his narrator, his angle, his spot-light character, and makes no change without a corresponding gain. In adhering to his angle, or by the subtlest and easiest of shifts, the skilled writer finds that he intensifies the impression in maintaining place unity, character unity, or both. The untrained writer skips blithely from the heroine in Albany to the hero in Zanesville and produces a disjointed fragmentary story, which leaves the reader with no very definite impression save one of annoyance. The spot-light has become of necessity a veritable search-light.

It should be clear that after the narrator is determined upon, the material takes on a different aspect. I fthe all-observant writer is to tell the story, he may look upon his material as if he were a playwright, and ask himself,

"How much of all this play shall I place before the reader so as to give him in most dramatic manner the struggle or complication and leave upon his mind a definite impression?" But if one of the characters is to tell the story or if the story is to be told by the reporting "I," then certain events will occur of which the narrator will, of necessity, know only a part: he must guess causes from effects; he will lose entire sections of the action, only to see others correspondingly intensified. Then the author's task is one of keeping to the point of view of the person chosen, of selecting the salient features of the story such a character would logically know. He must not trespass beyond the bounds, the limited range, of such a character. Nothing should be told that "I" does not see, or hear, or know.[2]

Exercises for Chapter VII

Read Browning's "The Ring and the Book." What deductions can you make (a) about the many points of view in connection with the whole poem? (b) about the poet's recognition of the underlying value in the point of view as a literary device?

Who are the "spot-light" characters in the following stories?—"The Killers," by Ernest Hemingway; "Child of God," by Roark Bradford; "Yarbwoman," by Rose Wilder Lane; "Cane River," by Lyle Saxon; "The Cat

[2] Point of view as used in this chapter equivalent to the angle of narration is not to be confused with the mental attitude of the writer. Mental attitude may be conveyed directly by definite comment, or better, indirectly by sympathetic colouring of the narrative. George Meredith is satiric; Thomas Hardy is fatalistic. Compare the colouring of "General Ople and Lady Camper" with that of "An Imaginative Woman."

That Lived at the Ritz," by Louis Bromfield; "The Guardeen Angel," by Frederick Hazlitt Brennan; "The First of Mr. Blue," by Myles Connolly; "Lady Wipers—of Ypres," by Llewellyn Hughes; "Midwestern Primitive," by Ruth Suckow; "The Law Beaters," by Richard Connell; "Curtains," by Fiswoode Tarleton; "Mr. Reginald Peacock's Day," by Katherine Mansfield; "Haircut," by Ring W. Lardner; "Night Club," by Katharine Brush. Does the author of any of these stories invade the minds of any of the characters? Which of them? Does he anywhere so shift to the mind of a single character as to achieve for a considerable space the point of view of that character? Are any of these stories told by the "I" narrator? If so, why?

From whose points of view are the following stories told?—"The Most Dangerous Game," by Richard Connell; "The Secret Sharer," by Joseph Conrad; "After Holbein," and "A Bottle of Evian," by Edith Wharton; "The Beast in the Jungle," "The Jolly Corner," and "The Real Thing," by Henry James; "Spider, Spider," by Conrad Aiken; "Arabesque: The Mouse," by A. E. Coppard; "Good Old Uncle Homer," by Nunnally Johnson; "Home Is the Sailor," by Bill Adams; "Mr. Smith," by Lee Foster Hartman; "The Country of the Blind," H. G. Wells; "Another Wife," by Sherwood Anderson. Does the objective point of view supplant here and there the omniscient point of view? Are the two used throughout in any of the stories listed above? How is unification achieved when such shifting occurs, if it does occur?

What does Ring W. Lardner gain by telling "The Golden Honeymoon" in the first person, by the octogenarian groom? What does M. C. Blackman gain in telling "Hot Copy" as if by the newspaper man?

Tell "The Sire de Maletroit's Door" from (a)

Blanche's angle, (b) the Sire's angle, or point of view.

Tell "The Gift of the Magi" from Jim's angle, or point of view.

Tell "A Tragedy in Little" from the mother's angle, or point of view.

Narrate the Brushwood Girl's story, making it as far as possible the counterpart of the Brushwood Boy's story.

Tell a story which you might entitle "Joe Dagget Returns" from Joe's point of view, making it the counterpart of "A New England Nun."

Read Dorothy Parker's "A Telephone Call" and try to achieve the counterpart, using the man's point of view.

Read again Virginia Woolf's "The New Dress," and try to present the character of Mabel Waring objectively, using the point of view of some one at the Dalloway party.

Build a plot calling for three characters. Try presenting the story of each character, in turn; with the "spot-light" on each character, in turn.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SCENARIO

Certain parts of the story plot need expansion; comparison with the drama; definition of scene; formula; setting, and how given, three methods; illustrations; action, what it includes; stage business and gesture; relations of the two; illustrations; gesture and stage business; means of character differentiation; necessity for attending to details of scene work; error in relying on conventional; necessity for purpose of scene; illustrations of three chief purposes; transitions, larger and smaller scene divisions, illustrations; preparation of scenario; analysis before synthesis; "A Day Off," "The Killers."

WHILE the author is working out his plot and considering the angle of narration, he foresees that certain parts will need expansion and emphasis; that the reader will demand them for entertainment. The story writer has his counterpart in the playwright, who knows that he must present certain parts of his fable directly. An audience having sat through more than four acts of "Romeo and Juliet" would not be pleased to see a messenger run upon the stage and hear him describe the poignant tomb scene, however well he might picture it. After Hamlet has arranged with the strolling actors to present "The Mousetrap," he would hardly gratify the audience if he returned to the stage somewhat later with an account of the performance and a statement of the results. The scene in the Capulet monument and the one wherein Hamlet traps the conscience of the king the

audience must have. Similarly, the reader of the story demands dramatic presentment of certain parts, and he is usually more interested if they are conveyed to him in dramatic form or in a series of scenes.

The scene[1] presents a setting in which the action is supposed to be continuous. In formula,

$$\text{Scene} = \text{Setting} + \text{Action} \begin{cases} \text{Stage business} \begin{cases} \text{Property} \\ \text{Business} \\ \text{Gesture} \end{cases} \\ \text{Conversation or Dialogue.} \end{cases}$$

The setting may be given 1. by the author, 2. from the point of view of a character though still in the author's words, 3. by the character, 4. by a combination of methods. For example, in "The Three Strangers" Thomas Hardy as author describes the position of the shepherd's hut, the exterior and the interior. Having returned to the surroundings and the solitary figure walking toward the cottage, he adds further details as they appear to the man so introduced. In Katherine Mansfield's "A Dill Pickle," the first sentence indicates that "she" saw "him" again. "He was seated at one of those little bamboo tables decorated with a Japanese vase of paper daffodils. There was a tall plate of fruit in front of him. . . ." Here, briefly, one character and his setting (the restaurant is implied strongly enough by the signs) are viewed through the eyes of another char-

[1] Clearly the scenes cannot be determined before the solution of problems treated in the preceding chapter. For example, if Kipling had written the story of "The Brushwood Girl" instead of "The Brushwood Boy," he would have had different scenes throughout, with the exception of those in which the two main characters appear.

acter. Though the definite setting should be given near the beginning of the narrative, that the reader may be "fixed," yet details must be distributed throughout, that he may not lose sight of time and place. "A Dill Pickle" continues with mention of an orange, coffee, tapping on the table for the waitress, second mention of the paper daffodils, catching up a glove from the table, and ends (symbolically, too,) on the cream. In "Sea Constables," the reader is briefly given the setting in the first paragraph: "The head-waiter of the Carvoitz almost ran to meet Portson and his guest as they came up the steps from the palm-court where the string band plays. . . ." [Conversation] . . . "Henri nodded toward a pink above . . ., which discreetly commanded the main dining-room's glitter and blaze" . . . [exposition]. . . . "The most recent foreign millionaire and the even more recent foreign actress at a table near the entrance clamoured for his attention while he conducted the party to the pink alcove. With his own hands he turned out some befrilled electrics and lit four pale rose candles." . . . "The men stared at the long perspectives of diners, busy at a hundred tables." The author groups these details near the beginning, but in mention of the menu, the vinegar, the Burgundy, he continues to emphasise the setting; a setting purposefully contrasted with that of the constable's daily life.

Action, it will be observed, includes dialogue and "stage business." The latter term, borrowed from stage parlance, is used here to indicate stage action and movement other than dialogue, and for the sake of further convenience is divided into gesture and property business. For example, "She nodded . . . and zigzagged her

finger again"[2] is obviously concerned only with gesture; whereas, "I made a mighty serious business of my repairs and a glittering shop of my repair kit, spanners, pump, and the like, which I spread out orderly upon a rug"[2] emphasizes the properties. "Peter, with a wag of his kind old head, modestly excused himself"[3] emphasises gesture; "Again, for a pause, on the sofa, his god-father smoked"[3] connotes the pipe, or property. Comparison of these last two examples reveals that the border-line between property business and gesture is indistinct; the purposes of the two are in many instances identical. Property business, in general, lends verisimilitude to place, character and act. In Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Blue Murder," Camden's resting the head of his sledge in the pocket of his leather apron, driving another stake, hoisting his weight over the fence—these combinations of act and property add lifelikeness to the farm story. Gesture, in general, adds naturalness to speech, and increases verisimilitude in detail of character. "He looked at the clock on the kitchen table, shook it, and read it again. He went to the telephone and fumbled at the receiver." (Both sentences about Frank). "Camden sang as he pumped his bellows. . . . Fishing an iron shoe from that inseparable apron pocket of his, he thrust it into the coals and blew and blew. . . . Pounding, pounding . . . he had to step over the nail-box . . ."—these combinations of property and gesture indicate mental states in addition to the physical behavior that carries on the outer action at their extremes, gesture and property business are distinct. "He received me with a great shout

[2] "They," by Rudyard Kipling.
[3] "The Tree of Knowledge," by Henry James.

of laughter . . . he held me off by the shoulders, and punched my ribs, and hustled me into his berth"—this indication of brotherly interest is a long remove from "then that anchor, tipping over, rose up like something alive; its great, rough iron arm caught Maggie round the waist, seemed to clasp her close with a dreadful hug, and flung itself with her over and down in a terrific clang of iron, followed by heavy ringing blows that shook the ship from stem to stern . . ."—in which the property, by the way, is more than property since it is endowed by Conrad with human characteristics. "His lips moved but no sound issued" is a long way from "Fenayrou . . . drove the knife home between his shoulders."

The way in which an author handles gesture and other phases of the "business" differentiates his characters;[4] it further differentiates his style from that of other writers. "Her companion wheeled round for impatience"[5] fits Mrs. Guy, as also "Then with a sharp little jerk of her head and a backward reach of her beautiful arms she undid the clasp"[5] . . . On the other hand, this speech with the accompanying indication of manner, fits Charlotte Prime "'*Disposed* of them?' the girl gasped. . . . 'He wrote me,' she panted, 'that he had smashed them'."[5] Though Henry James's individualisation of characters is subtle it is powerful; and it is effected through manner and gesture rather than through speech. "The man laid a gloved hand on the table. It creaked corkily at the wrist. 'Bethisy-sur-Oise,' he explained." . . . "Portson nudged Winchmere, who was slanting

[4] For further discussion, see *Characterisation* and *Dialogue*, Chapters X and XI.
[5] "Paste."

sideways in his chair. . . ."[6] These two examples of stage business are typical of Rudyard Kipling's style, as different from that of Henry James.

The student cannot pay too much attention to details of scene work; they are among the small things that make the large differences. Yet from most amateur narratives, young writers regard gesture and business as conventionalised devices for propping the remarks of characters. "So speaking, she drew herself to her full height," "He thoughtfully flecked the ashes from his cigar," "With a glad cry she threw her arms about him," and other statements equally venerable suggest by their faithful presence that the student relies on the hackneyed.

No scene should find a place in the story unless its action fulfils a definite purpose. Not all the parts of a scene, even then, need to be developed. If setting in an earlier scene is adequately given, it may be dismissed briefly in one following. Action may be summarised in a few sentences or in a few significant gestures. But without purpose the scene—whether condensed, suggested briefly or expanded—loses its reason for being. It should keep the locale before the reader, should introduce, develop or reveal character, or it should advance the action of the story. The last named function is most important. If the revelation of character is simultaneous with advancement of action, the scene is all the better for the circumscribed limits of the short story. For one hundred words accomplishing these two purposes, nothing better can be adduced than the climax scene of "Sir Watson Tyler." It will be recalled that in this story by Harvey O'Higgins, young Wat has gone to

[6] "Sea Constables."

the home of Alicia Janes, whom he loves and whom his family opposes. The telephone rings, Alicia says, "It's for you. . . . Your sister." Wat goes to the 'phone, puzzled, and hears Millie's voice. "You're to come home at once," she said. As her meaning percolates through Wat's brain, she slams up the receiver, "and in that moment history was made." Wat goes back to Alicia, face front, head up. "She looked at him expectantly. 'They want me to bring you to see them,' he said."

Illustrating the combination that keeps the locale before the reader, develops character and advances the action, may be cited that following Wat's remark above. He and Alicia walk over to the Tyler home. Seen from without "it was modestly withdrawn behind its trees, its flower-beds, and its lawns." . . . "A maid opened a door on a hall that was architecturally stuffy, . . . and the drawing-room was overcrowded with pink-upholstered shell-shaped furniture. . . ." Wat leaves Alicia there and goes upstairs where Millie protests against his bringing Alicia to see Mother. The scene between them ends with Wat's tossing her on to her bed and leaving her there sobbing, outraged, while he straightens his tie, goes downstairs and announces to his mother in the sitting room that he has brought Miss Janes to call. It makes no difference for the purpose of illustration that two or three scenes, in the technical sense, are here combined. The presentation of the setting, the struggle between the brother and sister and the advancement of the action are given in less than two pages. If the use of two or three scenes in quick succession, however, seems to beg the question or illustration, let us choose

another instance. Roark Bradford's "Child of God" begins, "When Willie told the preacher that morning that 'everything is all O. K., Revund,' he meant it from the bottom of his heart." The following dozen lines indicate a jail setting, through "the damp, dirty stench that floated up from the dark closeness of the cells below him," and the action, through the implication in Willie's next remark: "Cap'm Archie told me I could have ev'ything I wanted fer brekfus'." The author not only introduces Willie, for by the words Willie speaks the reader sees him no hardened criminal and is moved to the sympathy that never leaves him.

Larger scene divisions and other story divisions are connected with each other by the passage of time or the change of place. In the drama this lapse of time is indicated by the dropping of the curtain and by the changed dress of the characters. That the place is changed is obvious from the new setting displayed with the rising of the curtain. The story, lacking these devices, must indicate the transition otherwise. The simplest statements may suffice. "Time passed," "The years passed, treading on one another's heels," Hawthorne summarises the long gaps in "The Great Stone Face." Some authors, in spite of the objections offered by petty criticism, use to indicate transition, stars or double spacing. In "They," to separate Part I from Part II, Kipling says, "A month or so later—I went again." To separate Part II from Part III, he uses dots and a statement: " . . . I had intended to return in a day or two, but it pleased Fate to hold me from that side of the county, on many pretexts, till the elder and the wild rose had fruited. There

came at last a brilliant day." . . .[7] In "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney" he uses this transition: "Three days passed—a fourth and a fifth. The week drew to a close and Mulvaney did not return." The statement emphasises the *length* of time; Mulvaney's absence was noteworthy and extended. A master of the craft never allows time to pass unless there is a reason. The amateur makes such a transition as "It was about a week later," although he may have no reason for delaying the incident beyond the next day or the next hour.

Scenes in close sequence are connected with each other by the entrance or exit of a character or by immediate passage of characters from one room to another. After an explanation of Willie's presence in jail and a sure indication that the gallows has been prepared, the author ends the first scene: "Hyar dey comes, son," the preacher said kindly. "Git up off'n yo' knees." Cap'm Archie and a half dozen others enter the cage, a brief scene follows, and a second transition shows the party marching up the narrow steps to the gallows. Such transitions closely unite larger dramatic divisions. After the

[7] In connection with the means of indicating transition, notice the efficiency of dots to convey something otherwise omitted. Kipling by their use in "The Mark of the Beast" implies that the torture of the leper is too revolting for exhibition. Mrs. Wharton's dots have a special significance, in that they convey a fact, a subtlety of thought, a play of feeling not so effective when translated into speech. This is the end of a division of "Ethan Frome":

"'Oh, Matt, I thought we'd fetched it,' he moaned; and far off, up the hill, he heard the sorrel whinny, and thought: 'I ought to be getting him his feed. . . .'

. . . . . .

. . . . . ."

Most readers will probably find three lines of periods too much for apprehension. Certainly, the writer who is learning should beware of too much dependence upon this cryptic mannerism.

trap is sprung, even as Willie begins: "Makes me love ev'ybody," the author uses a double space to indicate a break of greater moment than has occurred heretofore, and continues "Willie did not finish that line, however." The reader soon recognizes that the scene following takes place in no setting that ever was on sea or land but only in Willie's last imaginings. It is wise, then, to show the change from reality to fancy by the double space as well as by the sentence quoted.

Whether the scenes are separated widely in time and place or whether they lie near together, the pure transition takes account only of time and place. It is not to be confused with expository or narrative material extraneous to the immediate progress of the story.

Now in preparing his full scenario, the student should make use of the principles above set forth and exemplified. Every scene should have a purpose; its action should be clearly directed to that purpose; the necessary characters and only the necessary characters should take part; the time and the place, though not of necessity stated, should be clear in the author's mind. The value of such scenario is incalculable to the writer who is learning to shape material. The experienced writer may or may not make use of it as a visible step; but he uses it in his mental progress toward the finished story.

Before building up his own scenario, however, the student may find it profitable to analyse a number of stories which easily lend themselves to the exercise. The first scenario offered is of Alice Brown's "A Day Off," with which the student should familiarise himself before studying the analysis. The story may be found in "The County Road," by Alice Brown; and in the collection

"Short Stories for College Classes," edited by Blanche Colton Williams.

A DAY OFF

BY ALICE BROWN

Characters: Abigail Bennet (Abby).
Jonathan.
Claribel.

Scene I

Part 1

Characters: Abigail and Jonathan.
Time: An April morning.
Place: The Bennet kitchen.
Action: Abigail breaks an egg; Jonathan protests against cake; he reveals himself a meddler. Abby sets away her cooking materials.
Purpose: To introduce characters and to show Jonathan's interfering habits.

Part 2

Characters: Abigail and Claribel.
Time: Following action in part 1.
Place: The same.
Action: Claribel wishes her dress hooked. Abby washes her hands, fastens the dress, puts up a tendril of Claribel's hair, and smooths a bit of lace. She advises Claribel to hurry while "father" is outside talking. Claribel says she must have some thread and "Hamburg." She is going to walk to the village, and Ballard will overtake her.
Purpose: To introduce a third character and through her the complicating thread.

Here Jonathan enters.

Part 3

Characters: All three mentioned above.

Time: Following events in part 2.

Place: The same.

Action: Jonathan asks Claribel where she is going, says he has to go her way, looks into the glass, decides he doesn't need to shave, and hurries out to the barn, asking his wife to help him with the bits. Claribel and Abby follow, hesitatingly.

Purpose: To show the frustration of Claribel's plans.

Scene II Transition Scene: The three in various parts of the space between house and barn, and in the barn itself.

Time: Just following the action in scene I.

Action: Jonathan harnessing; Abigail consoling Claribel (who tells her mother that Ballard and she had meant to select a watch) and helping Jonathan. Scene closes with Jonathan and Claribel driving off.

Purpose: To show Claribel's disappointment, and to increase the complication.

Transition II. Time passes until 3 o'clock. (Action further summarised until the next day.)

Scene III

Characters: Abby and Claribel.

Time: The day after events in scene I.

Place: The pantry.

Action: Claribel says she is going over to get a skirt pattern from Ballard's mother. She reveals why the day before was a particular day, etc. Abigail tells her to run along.

Purpose: To motivate Abby's behaviour, further.

Transition III. Claribel departs.

Scene IV

Characters: Abby and Jonathan.

Time: A little later.

Place: Kitchen (and sitting room).

Action: Again Abby tells Jonathan she is mixing cake, and she tells the first lie, "Cup cake." She breaks two eggs at the same instant on the edge of the bowl. Jonathan wants Claribel. Abby says Claribel has gone to Mis' Towle's to carry back a borrowed peck measure. Jonathan, now in the kitchen doorway, ponders. He thinks he took back the measure. "Oh, no, you didn't!" Abbey says, "Claribel took it." Finally Jonathan asks whether Claribel needs more clothes. Abby says yes. He asks whether Abby has given Claribel any money. She tells her third lie, "Not a cent." Jonathan says he will make a check for what Abby thinks best. For a moment she softens. But when Jonathan asks next if she will make wedding cake, she says no, she has a little on hand. Fourth lie: Aunt Lucretia left it. Jonathan comments that the egg is "terrible yeller." Fifth lie: "It had two yolks." Abby closes the oven door, clears the table and sits down to sew. Jonathan asks the price of the edging. Sixth lie: "Two cents." He asks about a wider piece. Seventh lie: "I made it." Eighth lie: "On clo'es pins."

Transition IV. Jonathan goes out to the barn. Time passes until dinner.

Scene V At dinner. Abby tells her ninth lie, when Jonathan suggests that he will step over to Ballard's if Claribel is there and bring her home, in saying that Claribel is upstairs with a head-

ache. "I've turned the key in the door." Dinner is concluded.

Transition V. After dinner Abby speeds upstairs and after locking the door takes out the key.

Scene VI

Characters: The same.

Time: Five o'clock.

Place: Cellar and door above.

Action: Abby says she "never said any such thing" as that she had the key. "Clary's locked it (the door) and you let her be." Tenth lie.

Purpose: To show that Abby persists for Claribel's sake in her falsehoods.

Transition VI. Jonathan goes off to the barn, grumbling.

Abby prepares supper.

Claribel comes home.

Scene VII

Characters: Abby and Claribel.

Time: Before supper.

Place: In the kitchen.

Action: Revelation of Claribel of the day's events.

Purpose: To show that Claribel has had a happy time and to indicate Abby's repentance.

Transition VII. Time implied until supper. Suggested supper scene. Claribel shows her watch; Jonathan says they will get together more money for "clo'es." Claribel goes to bed early.

Scene VIII

Characters: Abby and Jonathan.

Time: After supper.

Place: In the kitchen, and "moving" scene, as they go to bed.

Action: Jonathan tells of the thief that has been caught.

> Abby is tired and pale. She speaks insistently, "It don't do to do the leastest thing that's wrong." And she adds, "It's because wrong-doin's so pleasant." She suggests that the thief probably started his downward career by grabbing "an apple off'n a tree." As they go upstairs together, Abby says she would never "dast" to have another such day. Jonathan, who has preceded her, calls back, "Who you talkin' to?" "I'm comin'," says Abigail; "I'll bring the light."

Such analysis reveals that a scene need be, by no means, fully developed; it may be condensed, even, to a mere transition. Always that which should be expressed is the essential business or purpose.

Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers," remarkable for its leanness, has been acclaimed one of the best stories of today. It may be found in the author's "Men without Women," "O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories, 1927," edited by Blanche Colton Williams, "The Best Short Stories of 1927," edited by Edward J. O'Brien, "A Book of Modern Short Stories," edited by Dorothy Brewster, "Significant Contemporary Stories," edited by Edith Mirrielees, "Creating the Short Story," by Henry Goodman, "Modern Short Stories by Leonard Brown, and in *Scribner's Magazine* (March, 1927), where it was first published. Again, read the story before studying the analysis:

THE KILLERS

BE ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Characters: Al, Max; these have the leading roles.
George, Nick Adams, and Sam, the Cook;

these are secondary characters.
Ole Anderson, the man to be killed; passive character.
A street car motorman, three other men, Mrs. Bell; these are of minor importance.

Scene I

Characters: George, Nick, Al, Max, and later Sam, the cook.

Time: Five o'clock.

Setting: Henry's lunch room.

Action: Al and Max enter, order dinner, eat with their gloves on, sew Nick behind the counter with George, ask who's in the kitchen, and tell George to bring him in. Sam enters; but they are not going to kill Sam; he and Nick are ordered back to the kitchen; Al follows them and shuts the door.

Purpose: To give the setting, introduce the characters, and begin the action.

Scene II

Characters: Max and George, later Al.

Time: Immediately following scene I.

Setting: The same, enlarged by the opening of a window after the action continues a few seconds.

Action: Max watches the mirror as he talks; George wants to know what it's all about. Max calls to Al, who opens the kitchen window and orders those in front to take certain positions. Max tells George they are going to kill a Swede, Ole Anderson. Ole eats here sometimes, at six o'clock. George wants to know why they will kill him. Talkative Max says, "to oblige a friend"; Al orders him to shut up; says he has

tied up Sam and Nick. George is told what to do if anybody comes.

Purpose: To heighten suspense, and to deepen the deadly intention of the killers. This intention is indicated not only through their words but through their insouciant, matter of fact treatment of the lunch room men.

Scene III

Characters: George, the motorman, Max.

Time: Six fifteen o'clock.

Setting: The same as for scene II.

Action: The motorman enters and asks for supper; he is told Sam is out, and leaves.

Purpose: To show that the killers' orders are respected, to continue suspense, and to contribute verisimilitude—needed by the reader, who can scarcely believe his eyes.

Following Scene III, a passage of straight narrative relates that two other people came in. George went to the rear and saw Al guarding with a sawed-off gun Nick and the cook, both gagged. This narrative varies the stark drama and succinctly deepens the sinister theme.

Scene IV

Characters: The same as in the preceding scene.

Time: From five minutes to seven to ten minutes past the hour.

Setting: The same as for the preceding scene.

Action: George says Ole isn't coming. The men wait five minutes; a customer comes in, is told the cook is out and wants to know why they don't get another. He goes out. Max and Al leave.

Purpose: To show that the killers have apparently failed to get their man, to relieve the suspense,

and to carry on the realistic business through the grumbling customer.

Transition: George watches the killers cross the street; unties Nick and the cook.

Scene V

Characters: George, Nick, Sam.

Time: Immediately after the preceding scene.

Setting: The kitchen.

Action: The three discuss the killers; the cook doesn't like any of it, at all; George suggests that Nick go to see Ole; the cook advises him to stay out of it.

Purpose: To reveal the natures of the lunch room men, who have acted up to this time under compulsion, to show they will attempt to save Ole, and to strike up suspense through the cook's suggestion.

Transition: Nick walks to Hirsch's rooming house; a brief scene follows in which Mrs. Bell admits Nick. Further transition, she leads him upstairs. Nick goes in to Ole's room.

Scene VI

Characters: Nick, Ole.

Time: Immediately following the preceding action.

Setting: Ole's bed room.

Action: Nick tells Ole about the killers; Ole looks at the wall, and says he can't do anything about it; no need to see the police; he says he is through running around; he got in wrong; after a while he will make up his mind to go out. He thanks Nick; Nick goes.

Purpose: To show the character of Ole and the hopelessness of his case; the deeper meaning of the story begins to appear.

Transition: A brief scene in which Nick talks to the landlady; the purpose is chiefly to show that Ole is an ex-prize fighter and is "just as gentle." Again, realism is furthered through the every-day setting and businesss. Nick says good night and walks back to the lunch room.

Scene VII

Characters: Nick, George, Sam.

Time: Immediately following the preceding action.

Setting: The lunch room, as for scene I.

Action: George and Nick conclude the killers will get Ole, who has double-crossed somebody. It's awful to think Ole will be killed, but thinking about it will do no good.

Purpose: To end the action.

It should be remembered that each analysis is of a story that may have been or may not have been constructed on a scenario similar to this deduced. Some writers build always on a skeleton or scaffolding, others plan as they write; in any event, the *structure* is present.

Exercises for Chapter VIII

Write out a scenic analysis of Thomas Hardy's "The Three Strangers," John Russell's "The Fourth Man," Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter," Irvin S. Cobb's "Snake Doctor," Margaret Leech's "Manicure," Mariel Brady's "Peter Projects," Stephen Vincent Benét's "The King of the Cats."

In stories having imperfect or broken scenic development is the break due to purposed fragmentary suggestion of scenes, to exposition inserted, or to descriptive or

straight narrative material, to condensation of scenes, or to lack of some element in the scene—conversation, for example? What is gained or lost by the break in each instance you examine? What is gained by dramatic development in each well-marked scene?

Compare the effect of compactness in "The Fourth Man," "Wireless," "The Most Dangerous Game," and "The Sire de Maletroit's Door," with the effect of looseness in "The Brushwood Boy," "Sir Watson Tyler," "The Gioconda Smile," and "The Beast in the Jungle." What is gained by compactness? Is anything lost?

How is the time element managed in "Splendid with Swords"? "The Funnel"?

Practise development of scenes, basing each on some situation that presents itself to you as good for one scene only. For example: A stowaway is found in a plane just before it ascends. 2. A teacher confers with a recalcitrant pupil. 3. A number of students discuss the ability of an absent member. 4. One present reports to the absentee what was said. 5. An interview between the tenant and the landlord on the subject of apartment decoration. 6. The landlord gives orders to his superintendent on the same subject. 7. The tenant and his wife discuss the subject. 8. A young man calls up his friend over the telephone and invites him (or her) to a new play, or to a new motion picture, or to an hour on the lake. 9. The elevator man tells his latest experience. 10. When Bateman lied.

What are the most interesting scenes in "The Man Who Could Work Miracles," "Innocence," "Splendid with Swords," "Bubbles," "Child of God," "A Friend of Napoleon," "Claustrophobia," "The Secret Sharer," "Symphonesque," "Big Blonde," "The Homesick Ladies," "The Fourth Man"?

Recall a number of stories you read months, or years, ago; and ask yourself what scene is most memorable. For example, "The Madonna of the Future," "Miss Tempy's Watchers," "The Funnel," "Prelude," "Death in the Woods," "Cane River," "A New England Nun," "The Luck of Roaring Camp," "Beyond the Pale," "The Cask of Amontillado." Can you draw conclusions, after such an exercise, about the nature of the impressive? About the treatment of characters or events that contributes to impressiveness?

CHAPTER IX

CHARACTERISATION

Study from life the first requisite; observation and its value; necessity for considering action and reaction even in forming the plot; value of full knowledge; biography or possible biography; inadequacy of incomplete knowledge; laws of characterisation in short-story same as those governing characterisation in the novel; points of divergence; unity of effect demands a definite trait; Poe; Hawthorne; Bret Harte; Henry Van Dyke; traits found in contemporary stories; management of trait; character at a crisis *versus* character development or degeneration; illustrations; summary.

"How shall I paint a miniature?" asked a pupil.

"Go to a garden party," the master artist replied. The connection though indirect is logical. At a garden party the artist finds his type of woman in her appropriate setting: in short, the time, the place, and the subject are in harmonious adjustment. To immortalise in sculpture the life of the workingman, Constance Meunier studied the labourer in the fields, the factories and the mines. Before he wrote the dramas of the New York working girl, O. Henry talked with her in department stores, in laundries, in studios; as he looked from his window, roamed about the city or dropped into restaurants, he found everywhere something of pertinence to his subject. Go for study of character to a garden party or to Cooper Union; to the cañons of the Rockies or of lower Broad-

way, wherever men and women live and move. The short-story field is bounded only by the circumference of the earth. But to write with concreteness and truth, the writer must cultivate zealously the part of the field he chooses for his own. For the study of men and women in their surroundings is a prerequisite to the technique which recreates them for the printed page. And the sooner the student convinces himself of this fact, the sooner he will stop copying and begin to draw from life.

To one writer observation comes with ease; to another, with difficulty. One may label with smiting aptitude a score of persons while the other is enumerating with painful effort the salient characteristics of a single man or woman. But fortunately even for the most introspective, alertness and skill in observation may be acquired through practice, which requires mainly a keen eye and a sympathetic curiosity. If the student is wholly indifferent to people, he may as well throw over any attempt at writing stories. Let him build ever so good a plot, if he cannot create living characters to dominate it he has small chance of success. He need not specialise so intensely as the lady who declared she found the study of human ears the most fascinating thing in the world, nor so absorbedly as Stefan Zweig's heroine of "Four and Twenty Hours,"[1] nor so shamelessly as Billy of "The Harbor"[2]:

. . . "I wormed my way into friends by the dozen. I found it such an absorbing pursuit I could hardly wait to finish up one before I went on to another. There were

[1] Conflicts, Three Tales by Stefan Zweig. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul, The Viking Press, 1927.
[2] The Harbor, Ernest Poole, The Macmillan Co., 1915.

such a bewildering lot of them, now that I had pried open my eyes. Would-be painters, sculptors, poets, dramatists, novelists, rich and poor, tragic ones and comic ones, with the meanest pettiest jealousies, the most bumptious self-conceits, the blindest worship of masters, the most profound humility, ambition so savage it made men inhuman."

But observe he must, if he is to produce anything bearing the hall-mark of originality and freshness.

Plot we studied to learn the construction of the framework for a story which should present artistically characters in a struggle or complication having a definite outcome. Part of the story, therefore, has been composed when from the situation (character in conjunction with circumstance) the plot has developed. For simplicity, we assumed in the study of plot-making that the characters had no hand in determining their fortunes. Yet at every point in any construction not specifically labeled "For a story of plot,"[3] the character action and reaction must of necessity be considered. Would that character so behave? Why? Why not? are questions which may arise as preliminary to any plot step. And the characters or the plot may change or grow reciprocally to fit each other. In short, the *concept* of character must exist while the plot is forming. Character must, however, be *presented* to the reader; and as plot finally presented may differ from plot as constructed, so character as finally presented may offer only certain phases of character as conceived.

[3] For in a story of plot, plot dominates; in one of character, character dominates; and in one of atmosphere, atmosphere dominates.

It is necessary, then, for the writer to know his men and women before he attempts introducing them to the reader. Ibsen, it is said, as a preliminary to his stories wrote biographies of his characters. Such a preparatory step should insure fidelity to life, which is the highest praise a character in fiction can receive. To achieve fidelity to life, the beginner may well acquire the habit of studying character and of knowing so much about a particular personality that he might write the biography.

"To have on one's hands a half-created being without the power of finishing him must be a truly dreadful thing. The only way out of it is to kill and bury him at once. I have always thought, for instance, that the figure of Daniel Deronda, whose portrait, blurred and uncertain as it is, has been drawn with the most amazing care and with endless touches and re-touches, must have become at last to George Eliot a kind of awful spectre, always in her brain, seeming about to reveal his true features and his mind, but never doing it, so that to the end she never clearly perceived what manner of man he was, nor what was his real character. Of course, what the author cannot set down, the reader cannot understand."[4]

It is necessary to know one's characters fully before incorporating them in short-stories, though manifestations of character will be presented by a highly selective process.

For although the laws of characterisation in the short-story are the same that govern characterisation in the novel,[5] yet there are divergences in application because

[4] The Art of Fiction, Walter Besant. See p. 324.

[5] A subject which has been thoroughly discussed in works on the technique of the novel.

of the divergence in fictive type. This divergence here needs consideration.

As compared with the novel, the short-story must be more intense in any given space. The story must make its appeal in two thousand to ten thousand words; the novel may use fifty thousand or two hundred thousand. The novelist may roam at will through philosophical asides or cynical reflections, may insert an entire story by way of episode, may introduce many characters, many threads of interest. The short-story writer must, as a rule, bar philosophising, save what he can infuse throughout the whole; he must adhere to one or two threads of action, and in the latter choice must unify them into one effect; he must make use of only a few characters, one of which is dominant, and his work with these characters must be marked by greatest care in the selection of details. For the ideal is unity of impression; and as plot simplicity contributes thereto, so does limitation of character traits.

Poe set the example in presentation of character as of plot. He not only recognized that a definite trait exploited and intensified would produce its effect, but argued, *a fortiori,* that an abnormal trait or exaggerated characteristic would produce a more powerful effect. His men are monomaniacs, lunatics, victims of melancholia. Montresor is a monomaniac, moved by the single purpose of revenge to wall up his enemy; the murderer in "The Tell-tale Heart" , has committed a crime the diabolism of which resulted from insanity induced by a single cause; Berenice's lover is a victim of melancholia

* Reprinted by John Cournos, 1928, as one of "The Fifteen Finest Short Stories," Dodd, Mead and Company, New York.

which directs his acts to the grave robbing climax; Roderick Usher is the impersonation of fear. In the tales of ratiocination, where the plot is so much the main thing, the characteristic most needed is ingenuity.[7] In the gruesome stories, Poe's characters are exaggerations of the normal man and woman; with them he produced his effect.

The overworking of the horrible, of the appeal to the "thrill-seeker", it may be noticed in passing, has been relegated to melodrama. It may seem heretical, to the critics who swear by Poe, to affirm that he would not be read by the discriminating were he now writing what he wrote four score years back; but it cannot be denied that his situations are morbid and that his manner of developing them is melodramatic in the extreme. The writer of to-day may employ incidents as gruesome as those of "The Black Cat" or "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" or "The Tell-tale Heart." It is with a difference, however, if he finds acceptance by a discriminating public, the same public that recognises Poe as important from a historical consideration. The dominant incident in "The Duchess at Prayer" is identical with that in "The Cask of Amontillado." "The Mark of the Beast" is a story of torture no less than "The Pit and the Pendulum." But the later stories leave the physical details of the torture largely to the reader's imagination; Poe emphasises

[7] This ingenuity is brilliantly exploited but not so convincingly as is the ingenuity of Sherlock Holmes by Poe's successor. For example, in the street scene between Dupin and "I" ("The Purloined Letter"), where Dupin follows the thought processes of "I," he reasons logically, but overmarvelously, to be convincing. There is a lack of inevitability. But it must not be forgotten that Poe was the inventor, and that Sir Conan Doyle, having the form ready, could direct his efforts to improving it.

them. He not only inserts the knife but fiendishly twists it, prolonging agony.

But what of Poe's contemporaries and successors with respect to the chosen trait? Hawthorne, who was feeling his way to the short-story form, and who achieved it by apparent accident in a few perfect examples,[8] was in some respects more extreme than Poe. He employed not only abnormal traits but also made his characters half allegorical or symbolic. "I wrapped myself in pride as in a garment," says the Lady Eleanore, in the story which emphasises the proverb, "Pride goeth before a fall." Rappaccini is swayed by his plan of dominating the human race; Aylmer of "The Birthmark" is moved by the desire to perfect it. Hawthorne, like Poe, chose the unusual or extreme and intensified it.

Bret Harte, the American Dickens in characterisation, succeeded Poe and Hawthorne. In his earlier stories, particularly, his good characters are over-pious, his simple men are simpletons, his bad men consummate villains. Yet he had learned to temper the dominant trait; he emphasised the outstanding characteristic at the same time he noted incongruities. His men are consequently more human than those of Poe and Hawthorne. Tennessee's Partner loved Tennessee, who was bad enough to be hanged; Tennessee's death, therefore, is invested with pathos. "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" reveals self-sacrifice in dissolute Mother Shipley, and in degenerate Oakhurst. Their final acts compel the reader's admiration. In the first scene in "The Luck of Roaring Camp" the

[8] "Rappaccini's Daughter," "The Ambitious Guest," "The Birthmark," "Lady Eleanore's Mantle," "The Minister's Black Veil," "Roger Malvin's Burial."

"greatest scamp had a Raphael face, with a profusion of blond hair; Oakhurst, the gambler, had the melancholy air and intellectual abstraction of a Hamlet." Bret Harte, in short, makes his emotional appeal, with his exploitation of a characteristic. Poe strikes horror, induces awe, but rarely elicits sympathy. Bret Harte is the more dramatic, in that he is the more passionate.

Unless the contemporary writer wishes to write melodrama, he chooses traits not unusual or bizarre, but universally true. The normal is better for his purpose than the abnormal. If every heart is swayed by some passion, the passion need not run into madness.

"In every life worth writing about there is a ruling passion—'the very pulse of the machine.' Unless you touch that, you are groping around outside of reality.

"Sometimes it is romantic love:—Music, nature, children, honour, strife, revenge, money, pride, friendship, loyalty, duty,—to these objects and others like them the secret power of personal passion often turns, and the life unconsciously follows it, as the tides in the sea follow the moon in the sky.

"When circumstances cross the ruling passion, when rocks lie in the way and winds are contrary, then things happen, characters emerge, slight events are significant, mere adventures are transformed into a real plot. What care I how many 'hair breadth scapes' and 'moving accidents' your hero may pass through, unless I know him for a man? He is but a puppet strung on wires. His kisses are wooden and his wounds bleed sawdust. There is nothing about him to remember except his name, and perhaps a bit of dialect. Kill or crown him,—what difference does it make?"

"But go the other way about your work:
" 'Take the least of all mankind, as I;
Look at his head and heart, find how and why
He differs from his fellows utterly,'—
and now there is something to tell with a meaning."[9]

Select the prominent trait and exploit it in the struggle or complication. Coolness in danger, efficiency, cowardice, vanity, lack of common sense, dare-deviltry, unselfishness, fortitude, truthfulness, devotion to beauty, genius for friendship or love, gratitude—these characteristics find highlight exhibition in a number of stories recalled by a glance at the titles. Exploit the chosen trait as seriously as Kipling exploits the imperturbability of Little Tobrah, or Sherwood Anderson the disturbing curiosity of the narrator in "I Want to Know Why"; as wittily as Katherine Mansfield displays the vanity of Mr. Peacock; as simply as Roark Bradford presents the faith of Willie in "Child of God." But leave the reader in no doubt about the traits or the purposes for which they were selected.[10]

Character should be revealed at a crisis, as the brevity of the story—or what Henry James called "the exiguity of the vessel"—determines. Character growth or development may receive emphasis, as "The Substitute" recounts the history of Jean Le Turc's regeneration; but the steady development without the dramatic climax to re-

[9] Preface to The Ruling Passion, Henry Van Dyke, copyright, 1901, by Charles Scribner's Sons. Some of the titles in "The Ruling Passion" are suggestive of the traits presented: "A Lover of Music," "The Reward of Virtue," "A Brave Heart."

[10] Resemblance between the anecdote and the short-story recurs here. The former reveals one of these traits at a single dramatic moment; the latter in a crisis or climax in a line of interest.

veal it would make an inconsequential story. So "Baa, Baa, Black Sheep" traces the deterioration or the negative growth of Punch, but without the climax it would lack that which makes it effective. That is, to indicate crisis, the author must make his preparations. The work he gives to development compared with that allotted to crisis is a matter of proportion and individual method. Notwithstanding, however, the latitude of choice suggested, the truth is that emphasis on the crisis means a better story. "God has so arranged the chronometry of our spirits that there shall be thousands of silent moments between the striking hours,"[11] In choosing the title of his collection from Dr. Martineau's words, Eden Phillpotts gives recognition to the importance of crisis. Alice Brown evolved a title from the Persian proverb, "One instant only is the sun at noon," suggesting a similar recognition.[12]

A contributory reason for emphasising the crisis is that a short time and a single place connote brief, well-unified action and consequent intensity of effect. The acting time of "A New England Nun" is about twenty-four hours; the time involved is fifteen years. Louisa's development in spinsterhood during that time is indicated adequately but summarily; the critical period of one day is employed for the presentation of three or four important scenes. The acting time of "The Sire de Maletroit's Door" is only a few hours; the very nature of the crucial moment is such that it could not have been but for the dominant characteristic revealed in the Sire. The acting time of "The Killers" is three hours or so;

[11] The Striking Hourse, by Eden Phillpotts, London, 1902.
[12] High Noon, by Alice Brown, Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1904.

its crisis could not exist but for cold brutality hardened through years. The acting time of "The Fourth Man," perhaps less than a week, is the final climax in the lives of three incorrigibles; except for such incorrigibility as theirs, the climax scarcely could have been possible.

The various methods for indicating, summarising and revealing character we shall study in the next chapter. Meantime, it should be repeated that first-hand study of men and women is necessary to success in portraiture. The writer should not slavishly copy, but he should imitate the workings of nature. He will therefore not steal from life a character, but will create his own. For story purposes, he will then select a trait, not too abnormal or extreme, and will demonstrate its action in a crisis.

CHAPTER X

CHARACTERISATION (*Continued*)

Three methods of portrayal; description; relation of outer man to inner; brief descriptions desirable; economy conserved; main problem that of selection; Kipling, the master of flash-light descriptions; consistency a requisite; Henry James, master of describing through repetition; cumulative method illustrated; description includes name, dress, and personal appearance; three ways of presentation; importance of nomenclature; dress should be handled with discrimination; value of ancestry, education, etc.; illustrations; the analytical method; psychological analysis *vs.* psychological narration; Henry James, again; occasions for use of the analytical method; danger of over-use; the dramatic method the best method; characters should stand on their feet; action momentary and action habitual include dialogue, stage business, etc.; O. Henry on momentary *vs.* habitual act; three factors entering into behaviour; a combination of description, analysis and dramatic act usually found in characterisation; summary analysis of "Mary Postgate," for author's methods.

To picture a character, to reveal his mental processes, and to translate his personality in terms of behaviour the author brings into requisition, respectively, description, analysis, and dramatic action.

Since the reader will more readily find entertainment in the motives and acts of characters with whose outward appearance he is familiar, description is of first importance. The physical interprets the mental. Even a photograph is a fair index of the mind and heart of the original.

"For of the soule the bodie forme doth take;
For soule is forme and doth the bodie make."

In "The Tale That Wouldn't Do," Leonard Merrick's Bachelor Girl says:

" 'Blue eyes—and a dolly complexion, and flaxen hair; she only needed the ticket "My clothes take off!" But she was very pretty—nothing to find fault with, excepting that she hadn't a brain.' "[1]

The Bachelor Girl scarcely needed to add the second sentence; the first conveyed the idea. It should be noticed, however, that the physical is occasionally at odds with the mental; the crippled body of Porgy[2] is no index to his mind. The outward may be integrated with the inner by harmonizing detail, or the two may be contrasted with heightened effect.

Description, however, should be employed with discreet frugality in a brief narrative. The reader prefers to the tedious paragraph a word here, a sentence elsewhere. The writer, therefore, who inserts his descriptions between commas will succeed as a narrator more surely than one who masses them. Entirely logical is the truth of these statements; for the briefer the description, the less the interference with the action. Moreover, the apt brief description is efficient. It conserves by its economy the reader's time and energy for the enjoyment of the narrative. Unconsciously at all points in an eco-

[1] "The Tale That Wouldn't Do" in Whispers and Women, Leonard Merrick.

[2] See "Crown's Bess," the novel "Porgy," and recall the drama if you happened to see it. This negro of the twisted body is DuBose Heyward's chief creation.

nomically written story, the reader is supplying for himself details evoked by the distinctive phrase. Since the human family is composed of well-known type members, a feature common to a class connotes other characteristics, as slanting eyes suggest the straight black hair and yellow skin of the Oriental. In so far as he unconsciously helps to supply, he is helping to build, and therein has the greater pleasure. But for the writer who uses this flashlight method, the apt and telling phrase may not be easy to find. "I took to myself the advice of Flaubert, and from a table before a café I would watch the people around me and jot down the minutest details. I filled whole pages with my strokes. *But which to choose to makes this person or this scene like no other in the world?*"[3] Billy's perplexity was that which every serious student of technique will inevitably encounter and clear up for himself.

Kipling, more than most English story writers, knows the value of brief descriptions which bite into the reader's consciousness. "She was a fat woman in an apricot-coloured gown, with a heavily powdered face, against which her black long-lashed eyes showed like currants in dough." So brief a sentence conveys an image adequate for the reader throughout "The House Surgeon," The author adds, if I recall, not another picturing detail, except for the connoted one in "she surged across the lawn"; but Mrs. McLeod lives, created by the single stroke. A writer who calls up a general image of a character needs to remember mainly that in subsequent reference to that character he should add nothing to confuse the reader or to cause substitution of a new image.

[3] The Harbor, page 76. The italics are mine.

As he is consistent so far will the impression he creates abide.

Of authors who drill images into the brain of the reader, Henry James ranks first. Try the experiment of asking anybody who has read "The Real Right Thing" for a thumb-nail sketch of Mrs. Doyne. The chances are that although the one who answers may be unaware of the reasons for the definite impression, you will get this or its equivalent, "I recall her as a large woman dressed in black, with her face half hidden by a fan." The firmness of outline is produced by the cumulative method and by repetition. On page 87[4] the author says—"she rose before him there in her large array of mourning—with her big black eyes, her big black wig, her big black fan and gloves," etc. This brief description is clear, but the author takes no chances on its being erased; therefore, he cuts it deeper: pages 91-92, "She had a way of raising to the level of her nose the big black fan which she apparently never laid aside and with which she thus covered the lower half of her face, her rather hard eyes, above it, becoming more ambiguous." Farther, page 92, "Mrs. Doyne, still with her fan up, listened with interest." And page 100, "'Horror?' Mrs. Doyne gasped with her fan up to her mouth." And page 102, "'Guarding it?' she glowed over her fan." Finally, page 103, "He saw at a glance, as she offered him a huger, bleaker stare over the mask of her fan. . . ." Whereas the more brilliant flash may dazzle and stun the reader and so take him altogether, this tap, tap, tapping at the door of his mind will ultimately force the impression in.

Under description of a character are included name,

[4] The Soft Side, 1st Ed., London, 1900.

dress, and personal appearance. These may be presented 1. by the author, 2. by other characters, 3. from the angle of other characters. The sentence describing Mrs. McLeod is by the author, here the same as the first person narrator; the repeated descriptions of Mrs. Doyne are all from the angle of George Withermore. The description of Kipling's second-rate woman is given by Mrs. Hauksbee and Mrs. Mallowe:

" 'Dressed! Don't tell me that woman ever dressed in her life. She stood in the middle of the room while her *ayah*—no, her husband—it *must* have been a man—threw her clothes at her. She then did her hair with her fingers, and rubbed her bonnet in the flue under the bed. I *know* she did. . . . Who is she?' said Mrs. Hauksbee.

. . ." 'Delville,' said Mrs. Mallowe, ' "Shady" Delville to distinguish her from Mrs. Jim of that ilk. She dances as untidily as she dresses, I believe, . . .' "

This last method is more dramatic, also more economical; for it offers a basis whereupon to judge or estimate all the characters involved. Obviously a sneering remark of B, about A, of whom B is jealous, let us say, throws light on both characters. The reader may discount the sneer, but will hold it in mind for future reference; at the moment he may react against B.

The tyro or expert proclaims himself by the naming of characters. Best writers are masters in the art of characterising through nomenclature. This delicate business is one in which the amateur usually evinces no attempt to profit by the example of the professional. Mrs. Paige, Danyers, Mrs. Amyot, Professor Linyard, Mrs. Quentin, Osric Dane, Ethan Frome and a host of others bear witness to Mrs. Wharton's elegance in the application of

name to character. Mora Montravers, Mrs. Rimmle, Mark Ambient, Greville Fane, Peter Quint, and Brooksmith illustrate the answer of Henry James to the question, "What's in a name?" Mr. James displays that nice artistic finish which considers the small detail when in "The Real Thing" he names a work of fiction "Rutland Ramsay." He would not have used the title for one of his own volumes; but he has employed it here with euphonious dignity to separate the represented from the actual. Mulvaney, Learoyd, Ortheris, Dinah Shadd, Maddingham, and Tegg are all as distinctly Kipling's as the characters themselves.

The element of dress should be handled with discrimination. A person in real life may attire himself in accord with conventional requirements, may dress according to his own dictates, may wear what others thrust upon him, or may make use of a combination of methods. But story characters should reflect their individuality or reveal their social status in their apparel. It may be taken for granted, of course, that dress is harmonious with setting and no mention made of it. Major and Mrs. Monarch, of "The Real Thing," mirror the social world in which they have played a part; their reflection of this world, as purposed by the author, demands that they be attired conventionally, by their ideas of what is "proper." The old clothes of Yancee Goree, in O. Henry's "A Blackjack Bargainer," become the lever which turns the action of the story to its tragic dénouement. In each of these stories, therefore, the author has handled with requisite significance the subject of dress.

In addition to name, dress, and personal appearance, description includes also ancestry, education, or previous

experience, so far as they serve to explain a crucial act of the character or characters under consideration. John Russell says of the three white men on the raft, "Their bodies had been scored with brambles and blackened with dried blood, and on wrist and ankle they bore the black and wrinkled stain of the gyves." In this sentence personal appearance connotes previous experience of imprisonment and escape. Later, of Dr. Dubosc, the author states, "Many a crowded lecture hall in Montpellier had seen him touch some intellectual firework with just such a twinkle. . . ." One needs to read no further to understand why Fenayrou and Perroquet deferred to him, momentarily at least, as leader. Du Bose Heyward's "Crown's Bess," published in "O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories" (1925), ends on Bess's telling Porgy she has given her word to return to Crown. When published in the *Forum,* earlier, the story ended with Bess's standing by Porgy. Clearly, the struggle was so evenly balanced as to make either conclusion appear right—but the author prefered the reversion to habit. In Wilbur Daniel Steele's "The Anglo-Saxon" the struggle between heredity and environment is emphasized. Environment wins, but the victory is questionable to the end, and conceivably heredity might have won. Without doubt, whether connected directly or indirectly with the crucial incident of the story, past experience has contributory value in proportion as it serves to explain or justify the significant act of the character.

By the second method of character portrayal, analysis, is meant the baring of mental processes by the omniscient author, to whom the mind of his character lies open. If the author studies the mentality of his character dissoci-

ated from a particular situation or in general, he uses psychological analysis; for example, Galsworthy in "A Portrait" presents an inner description or analysis of the eighty year old gentleman, whose picture he also draws. If however the author follows the specific mental processes of a character, operations connected with a phase of the situation at hand, he uses psychological narration. The latter method, being more specific, is more frequently found in the short-story, and, as its very designation implies, partakes both of the nature of description and narration. Henry James's extended use of psychological narration is responsible for the statement that he is a novelist who writes like a psychologist, just as the concreteness of William James's methods labels him the psychologist who writes like a novelist. In this typical passage from "The Real Right Thing" the author is speaking of George Withermore, who has been asked to write the life of Ashton Doyne, deceased.

"He was not a little *frightened* when, even the first night, it came over him that he had really been most *affected* in the whole matter, by the prospect, the privilege and the luxury of this *sensation.* He hadn't, he could now *reflect,* definitely *considered* the question of the book—as to which there was here even already much to consider; he had simply *let* his *affection* and *admiration*—to say nothing of his *gratified pride—meet to the full the temptation* Mrs. Doyne had offered him.

How did he *know* without more *thought,* he might begin to *ask* himself, that the book was on the whole to be desired? What warrant had he ever received from Ashton Doyne himself for so direct and, as it were, so familiar an approach? Great was the art of biography, but there were lives and lives, there are subjects and subjects.

He confusedly *recalled,* so far as that went, old words dropped by Doyne over contemporary compilations, suggestions of how he himself discriminated as to other heroes and other panoramas. He even *remembered* how his friend would at moments have shown himself as holding that the 'literary' career might—even in the case of a Johnson and a Scott, with a Boswell and a Lockhart to help—best content itself to be represented. The artist was what he did—he was nothing else. . . ."[5]

The paragraph follows the stream of consciousness of George Withermore with respect to memory, immediate sensation, and contemplated action.

Introducing the reader to the mental recesses of the character suits best the deliberate style. It may be used in a story of rapid action when the plot movement needs retardation, or the workings of the character require exhibition with respect to the struggle. But, however used, it will contribute to retarded movement. If excessively employed, the result is loss in dramatic force; the study of character from an omniscient point of view supersedes the study of character in dramatic action. Although it is true that a story may be, as a whole, a psychological narrative and yet conform to the definition offered in this text, it is also true that in proportion as a story is presented objectively it adheres to type ideal. Moreover, it is difficult for any person to know just how another thinks. Too much "thinking" for characters inevitably means the infusion of the author's personality. Characters are less themselves, partaking largely of the nature of the author. It is comparatively easy to recount or describe an outward act. And every reader may deduce

[5] The italics are mine.

for himself the mental processes concealed or revealed by behaviour. Use analysis, therefore, sparingly, and for the most part to motivate or explain what might be otherwise ambiguous or without causation.

The dramatic method, or self-revelation through speech and action, should be employed, on the contrary, wherever possible. "Know this, then," says the Master, Rabelais, in Kipling's "The Last of the Stories," "The First Law is to make them stand upon their feet, and the Second is to make them stand upon their feet, and the Third is to make them stand upon their feet." Whether action be momentary or habitual it includes, as pointed out in the chapter on the Scenario, speech and stage business, or what the character does and says. There some points already have been made in regard to action, and others follow in the chapter on Dialogue. For the present, let us glance at the momentary speech and action of a character as compared with his habitual manner. The relation between the two offers the story writer opportunity for some of his best effects in contrast. For example, De Maupassant's "Coward" throws into high relief the habitual bravado of the Viscount by presenting at a crucial moment his craven behaviour. The relation also offers opportunity for strengthening by integration. Virginia Woolf's "The New Dress" interprets Mabel Waring's inadequacy and vacillation through her own words spoken to various characters under her several puny impulses. That under stress of emotion persons not only talk and act differently from their ordinary manner, but differently even from the way they have presupposed finds mirthful exemplification in O. Henry's "Proof of the Pudding."

Editor Westbrook, it will be recalled, argues with his impecunious friend, the unsuccessful writer, Shackleford Dawe that "all men and women have what may be called a sub-conscious dramatic sense that is awakened by a sufficiently deep and powerful emotion—a sense unconsciously acquired from literature and the stage that prompts them to express those emotions in language befitting their importance and histrionic value."

" 'And in the name of the seven sacred saddle-blankets of Sagittarius, where did the stage and literature get the stunt?' asked Dawe.

" 'From life,' answered the editor, triumphantly." . . .

" 'Tell me,' asked Dawe, with truculent anxiety, 'what especial fault in "The Alarum of the Soul" caused you to throw it down?'

" 'When Gabriel Murray,' said Westbrook, goes to his telephone and is told that his fiancée has been shot by a burglar, he says—I do not recall the exact words—'

"I do,' said Dawe. 'He says: "Damn Central; she always cuts me off." And then to his friend, "Say, Tommy, does a thirty-two bullet make a big hole? It's kind of hard luck, ain't it? . . ." ' "

But the editor holds that these and other citations are absurdly inappropriate words:—" 'they mirror life falsely. No human being ever uttered banal colloquialisms confronted by sudden tragedy.' "

To determine experimentally which of the two is right, the author and the editor concoct a note to the author's wife, Louise Dawe, which they will leave on the table where she will see it as she enters the door. The two men will be concealed by the portières.

" 'In that note I'll say that I have fled from her for-

ever with an affinity who understands the needs of my artistic soul as she never did. When she reads it we will observe her actions and hear her words. Then we will know which theory is the correct one. . . .'"

After arriving at the flat, the conspirators find a letter from Mrs. Dawe. Shackleford reads it aloud. It is to the effect that Mrs. Dawe and Mrs. Westbrook have joined the Occidental Opera Company. Mrs. Dawe did not want to starve to death, she observed, and Mrs. Westbrook was tired of living with a combination phonograph, iceberg and dictionary. . . .

"Dawe dropped the letter, covered his face with his trebling hands, and cried out in a deep, vibrating voice:

"'My God, why hast thou given me this cup to drink? Since she is false, then let Thy Heaven's fairest gifts, faith and love, become the jesting by-words of traitors and fiends!'

"Editor Westbrook's glasses fell to the floor. The fingers of one hand fumbled with a button on his coat as he blurted between his pale lips:

"'Say, Shack, ain't that a hell of a note? Wouldn't that knock you off your perch, Shack? Ain't it hell, now, Shack—ain't it?'"

O. Henry, therefore, argues neither for the extremely commonplace nor the extremely histrionic. But he suggests, playfully enough it is true, that under the stimulus of momentary action a character will behave not at all as he behaves habitually. A study of the final four paragraphs indicates that he has taken account of both speech and act. Contrast not only the exaggerated speeches of the two, but also "dropped the letter" (deliberate act), with "glasses fell to the floor" (lack of control); likewise, "deep vibrating voice" with "blurted between pale

lips." As the three factors entering into the behaviour of a person under a given stimulus are impulse, feeling and reason, so the dominance of any one of these and the way in which it becomes dominant reveal the inner personality, in short reflect character.

Characterisation, then, uses any of these methods or such combinations as are best suited to make of the character a living human being. Examine, for instance, the various elements as they are found in "Mary Postgate."[6] The author's description of Mary is given by the cumulative method. He first tells us that she was not young and that her speech was as colourless as her eyes or her hair. Later, he gives more definite details in saying that Young Wyndham Fowler repaid her by "thumping her between her narrow shoulders, or by chasing her bleating round the garden, her large mouth open, her large nose high in the air, at a stiff-necked shamble, very like a camel's." Further on he uses the details, "long back," "her lean self," "lean arms," "flat chest" and at the very end, "one faded canine."

In the first paragraph we are told that Lady McCausland wrote of Mary that she was " 'thoroughly conscientious, tidy, companionable, and ladylike. I am very sorry to part with her, and shall always be interested in her welfare.' " (Impression of Mary given by another character.) In the second paragraph, after the introduction of Miss Fowler, part of the personal description is given by the author. Then, "She listened unflinchingly to every one; said at the end, 'How interesting!' or 'How shock-

[6] Before reading the following analysis the student should know the story at first hand. See A Diversity of Creatures, by Rudyard Kipling, Doubleday, Page, 1917.

ing!' as the case might be" (Half-dramatic suggestion of habitual behaviour). The rest of the paragraph consists of details, given in catalogue fashion, which the reader most needs for the fundamental concept of Mary's character. The catalogue is given by the all-observant, rather than by the omniscient author. The third paragraph rehearses what Mary did when the orphan, Wyndham, was thrown upon Miss Fowler's hands. (Action of character, narrated, not presented.) The fourth paragraph recounts a speech of Mary's on hearing of the outbreak of war, "most vexatious," and is followed by Mary's services in the matter of the waistcoat, in paragraph five.

A brief dramatic presentation of character follows shortly when Wynn comes over from his training camp not thirty miles away. Uppermost, apparently, is Mary's feeling for Wynn, her sympathy in his preparation, and her ignorance of war machinery. A second dramatic presentation follows when after a few weeks Wynn circles down in his own machine. Hereabouts, she gives her age (" 'Forty-four,' said truthful Mary,"), and declares that she imagines she never would have been anything but a companion. Her habit of waiting on others is indicated in the sentence, "She fetched Miss Fowler her eleven o'clock glass of Contrexeville."

The announcement of Wyndham's death is the dramatic climax of the story. "The room was whirling round Mary Postgate, but she found herself quite steady in the midst of it. "Yes," she said, "it's a great pity he didn't die in action—after he had killed somebody." (Dramatic action. This speech marks the rise of hatred; the national spirit begins to overtop the phlegmatic individuality of Mary Postgate. So far, her love for Wyndham

and her habits of service are the main characteristics.) That her mind instantly leaps to the thought of the boy's suffering is indicated dramatically, "But Wynn says the shock of a fall kills a man at once, whatever happens to the tanks." For two columns the speeches attributed to Mary are by a master of psychology, by one who knows the queerly irrelevant turns the human mind takes when grieved and shocked past true expression. When to Miss Fowler's question, "Have you cried yet?" Mary answers, "I can't. It only makes me angry with the Germans," she is expressing, as far as her inhibited manner of speech allows, that strong feeling which is shown more dramatically at the close of the story.

The way in which Kipling contrives to make the reader understand that Mary Postgate was devoted to Wyndham is never once effected by any expression on her part. But when Miss Fowler asks, "Do you remember his sizes?" Mary answers promptly, "Five feet eight and a half; thirty-six inches round the chest. But he tells me he's put on an inch and a half. (Use of suggestion to indicate feeling). When having decided to burn his books and toys Miss Fowler advises Mary to "get Nellie to help," "'I shall take the wheelbarrow and do it myself,' said Mary, and for once in her life *closed her mouth.*" (Dramatic action: momentary *vs.* habitual.) Mary's progress in disposing of the boy's possessions is realistic and typical of her methodical ways. (Stage business emphasised through all-observant narrator.) Later, "it seemed to her that she could almost hear the beat of his propellers overhead" (Omniscient author speaks).

With easy shifts from the objective to the omniscient point of view and consequent dramatic or analytic pres-

entation of character, the author approaches the climax of action. After the bomb has fallen and killed the child, and after Mary has returned home to finish the burning of Wynn's toys and books, the twilight shrubbery becomes the setting for a drama wherein Mary finally reveals the hatred and the desire for revenge which have been set in motion by the death of Wyndham. She discovers the dying man, she leaves him long enough to get a pistol from the drawer of her toilet table (Significant dramatic act), she finds him expectant, and sees that he is alive sufficiently to hope for succour. She lets him know in German that his French, which he fumbles, does not deceive her (Dramatic action), and she waits for his death. As she waits, the author catalogues from her past experience a number of integrative details. Her "pleasure" (Omniscient author's word) "was broken by a sound that she had waited for in agony several times in her life." . . . "Go on," she murmured half aloud. "That isn't the end." . . . At the end "Mary Postgate drew her breath short between her teeth and shivered from head to foot" (Dramatic action). *"That's* right," said she contentedly (Dramatic action), "and went up to the house, where she scandalised the whole routine by taking a luxurious hot bath before tea, and came down looking, as Miss Fowler said when she saw her lying all relaxed on the other sofa, 'quite handsome.' " (Compare this impression with that of Lady McCausland, paragraph 1.) This dramatic presentation is fitted to the climax of action, and tells the reader more briefly and effectively about Mary's revulsion of feeling than could any amount of analysis on the part of the author. And it comes as the

climax in a combination of methods for presenting the character of Mary Postgate.

Exercises for Chapters IX and X

Make a study of race characteristics by comparison of the various nationalities whose representatives you meet. Make a study of types as you sit in an assembly (1) at the theatre, (2) in the class-room, (3) around the radio receiving set. Study the types you meet in a walk, in a street car or subway train. Try to find in a group of people some distinguishing outward mark for each person; (2) describe one person as economically as possible, to distinguish him or her from all others.

What value has the study of psychology for the story writer?

Give some time to intensive study of mental operations, that is, from the writer's point of view, and with regard to his need for understanding motives. For example, a handkerchief lies on the floor; a man neglects to pick it up. Is he oblivious to the physical fact because of some pre-occupation, or because he chooses not to stoop for it? Having determined the reason, use the mental characteristic in a more significant matter.

Writers occasionally in a character crisis determine the behaviour of the given character by applying the question, "What would *I* do here?" How far is this application sound?

Give some time to visualising imaginary persons.

Study the conversational habits of the people about you.

Observe men and women in real life, and notice how far definite traits determine action; notice, also, how far life itself affects the definite trait.

Review the stories you have read recently, recalling the exploitation of traits. How does the author prepare for the crucial situation in each story? Is action harmonious with character?

Is Sherwood Anderson's "The Triumph of the Egg" entertaining because of the father's character in general, his particular struggle with the egg, or for another reason?

Read Sherwood Anderson's "Mother" and Dorothy Canfield's "Portrait of a Philosopher." Compare these as character sketches; compare them as stories. In which is the struggle element expressed more definitely? Are spiritual values, therefore, subordinated to others of less importance? Is the professor's life-long struggle between conscience and immorality one in which either triumphed? What did the portrait say? What is the testimony of the old aunt's action, and what does the author say by placing the act at the close of the story? Should you understand better what Sherwood Anderson means to say if the mother had been able to express herself? Does the intention demand inhibition of expression?

In the following stories are you most impressed by the author's description and analysis of characters, or by what the characters say and do?—"The Sculptor's Funeral," by Willa Cather; "A Mayor and His People," by Theodore Dreiser; "The Tarn," by Hugh Walpole; "The Procurator of Judea," by Anatole France; "Innocence," by Rose Wilder Lane; "Blue Murder," by Wilbur Daniel Steele; "Hot Copy," by M. C. Blackman; "Haircut," "Liberty Hall," "Dinner," "Ex-parte," "There Are Smiles," and "Travelogue," by Ring W. Lardner; "The Sixth Man," by George Palmer Putnam; "Sir Watson Tyler," by Harvey O'Higgins; "The Nap," by Walter de la Mare; "Redbone," and "Treeshy," by Ada Jack Carver.

Study North American Indian characteristics in Mary Austin's "Papago Wedding."

What is the significance of Louis Bromfield's title, "The Cat That Lived at the Ritz"?

What characteristics are pronounced in Elsie Singmaster's "The Courier of the Czar"?

For a perfect portrait study, read Martin Armstrong's "Mrs. Lovelace."

Study the example of character at a crisis in Rupert Hughes's "Going for a Ride." Notice in connection with the moment of crisis the time element.

Study racial characteristics in Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Pioneers," "Arab Stuff," and "What Do You Mean—Americans?" How is race divergence used in the conflict? Study similarly Charles Caldwell Dobie's "The Thrice Bereft Widow of Hung Gow."

Observe the influence of heredity in the following stories:

"A Reversion to Type," by Frank Norris, James B. Connolly's "Mother Machree," Wilbur Daniel Steele's "The Anglo-Saxon," and "A Marriage in Kairwan."

How in Katherine Mansfield's "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" are the ages of the daughters conveyed? Did you think them younger, at the beginning of the story? Why? Does the author reconcile the two impressions through the character of the Colonel? How is the Colonel presented?

Lee Foster Hartman wrote a story entitled "Mr. Smith." It was published by a magazine which gave it the caption, "Two Minutes to Live." Why was the change made, and why when the story was reprinted—as one of the best of the year 1928—did the author prefer his original title?

What habitual expression of Mr. Reginald Peacock

("Mr. Reginald Peacock's Day," by Katherine Mansfield) indicates his feeling? What habit characterizes the hero of Bess Streeter Aldrich's "The Man Who Caught the Weather"? What speech habits of the killers ("The Killers," by Ernest Hemingway) indicate their intellectual states?

What is the significance of the adjective in Joseph Hergesheimer's "Tol'able David," (a) before you read the story, (b) after reading it?

What traits in human nature interest you most? Devise situations for revealing a few of these traits.

Write a characterisation of (1) one you admire, (2) one you distrust. Put them into a story or stories.

Write a characterisation of (1) one you pass by chance. Exercise observation and imagination. (2) one you know well. Balance your own judgment by that of others who know the person. (3) one you know only through hearsay. (4) a purely imaginary person.

Write a character story, using just enough action to convey the effect of narrative. Using the same character, introduce him or her into a story of struggle or complication.

What authors of late have exploited middle class stodginess? inanity? complacency?

What authors have found in the middle class qualities better than these? Do you draw conclusions? What are they?

CHAPTER XI

DIALOGUE

Dialogue versus conversation; relation to monologue; specious dialogue; purpose of dialogue; qualities; naturalness; vice of close imitation; what "talking in character" requires; fault; illustration; dialect: cautions about its use; illustrations; foreign idiom; illustrations; other qualities; dialogue should convince and interest; the key of dialogue; growth in dialogue; a note on the soliloquy; dialogue used in three ways to further action; illustrations; the business of clues; in portraying character dialogue serves three functions; illustration; a detail of composition.

DIALOGUE is that part of the action which gives the conversational effect to the scene presented. It is not the same as conversation, which may be freighted with matter not pertinent to the main thread of discourse or which may leave phases of the subject undeveloped. Dialogue in the story, as in the drama, must be economical; there can be no waste either through inadequacy or surplusage. Yet, paradoxically, the effect must be the same to the reader or hearer as that created by a conversation which includes unfinished and irrelevant topics. Here, again, the ruling principle of art is operative; truth in life is essentially identical with truth in fiction; but the facts of one are not identical with the facts of the other. Life is concerned with actuality; fiction with the semblance of actuality.

As dialogue is not promiscuous conversation unguided

by the principles of economy and suggestion, so it is not the speech of a single person. No writer would question the self-evidence of this statement. Yet frequently a succession of long speeches is found distributed between two persons, much after the manner in debate. The appearance is that of dialogue, but so far as effect is concerned, each speaker might offer his argument in full and without interruption. Dialogue is not, then, a series of alternating monologues. Again, the use of quotation marks is only a specious indication of dialogue. If, without aptitude or fitness, the author ascribes to a character his own philosophy, merely to put that philosophy before the reader in attractive guise, he is not writing a speech which has the true conversational effect. Even the clever epigrams of Oscar Wilde's men and women reflect the author rather than the characters; the speeches are too similar.

Dialogue is speech between two persons, or more than two persons, revealing the character of those persons and assisting vitally in the development or revelation of character or in forwarding the action of the story. "To give to the talk of a tale the air of naturalness and ease, to make it take its place in the story and be attractive without being too clever or too formal, to give it character and consistency, to impart to it movement and vivacity, to be sure that it helps forward the narrative in which it is set,—all these difficulties must be overcome before the writer can be said to write good dialogue."[1]

The first essential is naturalness. The most pleasing character delineation is got by making characters speak as they naturally would speak. In the historical novel all

[1] Talks on Writing English, Arlo Bates; *First Series*, page 250.

the characters talk in the same grandiose, stilted and careful manner; in the modern novel and short-story they must reflect their separate individualities. "The First Law is to make them stand upon their feet"; the first application of the law is to make them speak for themselves. Close imitation, however, does not mean naturalness. Unreality, even vulgarity, may result from too closely copying persons who speak with a fair degree of excellence, yet with colloquial freedom. One slang expression or slight departure from grammar lowers the tone of dialogue more than the same expression does in actual conversation. The opposite error is excess of formality or stiffness. The characters of Henry James are, perhaps, all over-nice. If they use a commonly accepted term, they do so with quotations. "But Braddle had always been, portentously, a person of free mornings —his nominal occupation that of looking after his father's 'interests,' and his actual that of spending, though quite without scandal, this personage's money, of which, luckily, there seemed an abundance." Here, the recognition by Mr. James of the colloquial "interests" is indicated by the quotations; later, in the same paragraph, Braddle brings out "You don't then think there's anything 'off' about her?" The marks enclosing "off" indicate that Braddle would not condescend to slang without indicating that he knew he was doing so. "You'll never, my dear chap, get a 'rise' out of me" is subtly different from "You'll never, my dear chap, get a rise out of me."[2]

"See that your characters talk 'in character'" is advice of the sort frequently offered the young writer. This is usually interpreted to mean that the author must know

[2] "The Great Condition."

his characters so well he will write down their thoughts as if recording them phonographically. But granted that the writer understands the psychology of his people, their mental actions and reactions, their opinions and what they would say on occasion, it is too often regrettably true that he has not fully evaluated sentence structure and form. The young writer, in particular, frees his characters with difficulty from the shackles of his own speech habits. Diction, rhythm, manner of phrasing, and length of sentence are more or less individual with every man and woman. Differentiation of characters in these particulars of style, therefore, contributes to boldness and strength of outline, and is not less essential than the matter itself. At the same time, however, the writer avoids attributing to a character his own phraseology, he should not be caught by the clap-trap of saddling upon a character a peculiar trick of speech or other mannerism. It is a vicious and easy habit. "Making Port," placed by E. J. O'Brien at the head of the list of stories appearing in 1916, has an example of this fault. Tom "scratched his ribs with a slow motion" is a trick which the author too obviously repeats. If the purpose of the author is to show that a character is possessed of a fixed idea, however, he will of necessity use repetition. Neil Lyons' dialogues[3] contain excellent examples. . . .

"Then an old woman came in—a very old woman, with rosy cheeks and a clean apron, and querulous, childish eyes.

" 'I want some morphium,' she said, 'to soothe meself down. Not that I got a right to look for much—at my age.'

[3] Sixpenny Pieces, John Lane, 1914.

" 'The doctor became jocular. 'What! he cried. 'A fine woman like you? Morphia for you? What? . . .'

" 'I ain't got no happetite,' said the old woman. 'And there's shooting pains in me 'ead, and I don't sleep proper, and I seems to feel lonesome, and I wants some morphium to soothe meself down with.'

" 'What's your favourite dinner dish?' inquired our inconsequent wag of a doctor.

" 'I ain't got no favourites,' replied the woman. 'I'm old, I am; what should I do with favourites at my age? I want some morphium to soothe meself down.'

. . . " 'And you mean to tell me,' cried the doctor with sudden heat, 'that you do not care for tripe? Good tripe, mind you—tender tripe, very well boiled, with just a flavouring of onions?'

" 'And if I did,' protested the woman, 'who's to cook it for me? There's so many young women to get the favours now, I find, and me so old. Can't I have a little morphium, Doctor: the brown mixture, ye know? To soothe meself down with.' "

After further dialogue the author concludes:

"The maiden got her morphia."

Another habit of the amateur, contributing to stiffness and over-precision, is the completion of all speeches. In life, speakers trail off, break off abruptly, or meet interruption by the interjections of others. Represented life should reproduce such trailing, breaking and interruption. But neither lucidity of meaning nor consistency of character should suffer.

The problem of effecting naturalness in speech further calls for a consideration of dialect. We shall have more

to say about it in the discussion of local colour; here let us observe that dialect is properly not to be defined merely as non-literary language. Popularly it is applied to those distinctions of speech characteristic of a locality or of the uneducated; but it includes also the special vocabulary of any class or profession. There is the dialect of trades, professions, provinces, nationalities or whatnot. Artistry demands that dialect be employed with restraint. Even though intelligible to the ear it is comprehended with difficulty by the eye of the average reader. Moreover, for the author accurately to convey the sounds in dialect variations requires a special phonetic alphabet. Indications of the general speech are easier for reader and writer alike, and the selective process at work in the indication contributes to economy. J. J. Bell doubtless toned down considerably the Scotchiness of Wee McGreegor and his Granpaw but it is doubtful whether the American reader appreciates fully the collection of which the following is a typical specimen:

"'I'll tak' the richt, Granpaw,' said Macgregor.

"Mr. Purdie extended the member mentioned, disclosing a slab of toffee done up in transparent paper. 'Ye're a rale smairt laddie!' he observed with a chuckle. 'Ye aye guess whaur the gundy is.'

"'Ay, I'm gey fly,' returned Macgregor modestly, beginning an onslaught on the sweetmeat.

"Mr. Purdie chuckled again, and slipped the packet of toffee which had been concealed in his left hand into his pocket.

"'I'm aye richt, am I no'?' inquired his grandson.

"'Ay, are ye, Macgreegor! It bates me to think hoo ye ken.'

" 'Aw, I jist ken. . . . It's awfu' guid!' "

By his shading of dialect an author may distinguish in degree of refinement certain characters from others, all of whom in real life would employ the same speech. For example, in "Calla Lilies and Hannah,"[4] Mrs. Newhall says,

"Well, 'tain't, that's a fact. Ellen thought hers was pretty handsome, but it can't shake a stick at this. Hers ain't got but three on it."

and Marthy answers in part,

"I allers had jest sech luck. . . . I tell Hannah if I be miser-ble in health, an' poor, flowers'll blow for me, and that's more than they'll do for some folks. . . . Look at Mis' Walker over there. I can't he'p thinkin' of it sometimes when I see her go nippin' past with her ruffles and gimcracks."

But Hannah's speech is marked by better use of English.

"Said he couldn't trust me to take any more boots home." . . . "Don't worry, I'll get some work somewhere, I guess." . . . "Good evening, Mrs. Ward, are your boarders in?"

Obviously, in avoiding double negatives and clipped g's, Hannah gains a certain distinction, which is needed in the final differentiation of character.

Foreign idiom is used to advantage by Henry James

[4] In A New England Nun, and Other Stories, by Mary E. Wilkins (later, Freeman).

and Edith Wharton in their delineation of the social classes. "I am afraid," remarks Paula Fetherel, "of its being a *succes de scandale.*" This French expression, the only one in "Expiation," hits off the taste, training and station of the chief character. "The Descent of Man" closes in emphasizing the academic mind of Professor Linyard: "He smiled and raised his hat to the passing victoria of a lady in whose copy of 'The Vital Thing' he had recently written: *'Labor est etiam ipsa voluptas.'*" In "Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie" a speech of Lady Champer concludes, "But she does nothing before. *Tirez-vous de là!*" She addresses the remark to an Italian Prince, who later prefaces a speech with *"Dio mio!"* These simple and natural departures from English aid in differentiating the lady and the gentleman, both of whom are contrasted with Lily Gunton.[5] Kipling's neat inclusion of Indian words contributes to local colour as well as characterisation, and doubly therefore to verisimilitude. The amateur, however, should beware of packing his story with foreign diction; unless it has a real purpose its value is only counterfeit.

Mr. Bates adds the qualities "convincing" and "interesting" to his requirements of good dialogue. If the characters under the given conditions "speak in character" their speeches will be convincing. And if natural dialogue, without unnecessary padding, furthers the action of an interesting short-story plot, the dialogue will be interesting. Interest bars tedium. The skilled dialogist bears in mind always that economy which is wrought by suggestion, and by which one reads between the lines.

[5] Only a step further is required to indicate a speaker whose dialogue is too highly seasoned with foreign phrases.

Dialogue should have a "general flavour of brightness or wit" because the key of a drama or story, which must be just a trifle higher than the key of the action would be in real life, demands tensity and concentration. And here Stevenson's advice to the young writer is most appropriate: "[Let him] . . . pitch the key of conversation not with any thought of how men talk in parlours, but with a single eye to the degree of passion he may be called on to express; and allow neither himself in the narrative nor any character in the course of the dialogue, to utter one sentiment that is not part and parcel of the business of the story or the discussion of the problem involved."[6]

The growth in excellent dialogue, William Archer states, is one of the most apparent indications of the extraordinary progress made by the drama of the English language. "Tolerably well written dialogue is nowadays the rule rather than the exception. Thirty years ago the idea that it was possible to combine naturalness with vivacity and vigour had scarcely dawned upon the playwright's mind. He passed and repassed from stilted pathos to strained and verbal wit (often mere punning); and when a reformer . . . tried to come a little nearer to the truth of life, he was apt to fall into babyish simplicity or flat commonness."[7] Mr. Archer further notes the reaction against long speeches and the special soliloquy.

For obvious reasons the solilquy or its equivalent may be used to advantage in the story. The soliloquy of the stage is unnatural; a normal person in real life does not "talk to himself." And although the convention may be

[6] A Humble Remonstrance.
[7] Play Making, William Archer, Boston, 1912.

granted, the soliloquy detracts from verisimilitude. In the short-story, however, the soliloquy is elaborated thought, not necessarily expressed by a character, but given by the writer as if educed or translated from the mind of the character. The convention, in short, is a corollary of that angle of narration by which the omniscient author looks into the mind of a character. If a story is told in the first person, that person can "think" all he likes; no convention is needed to accord him the act. The objective method, however, can indicate thought: a frown, a smile, a lifting of the brows—such outward signs "seem to say." And, again, the more dramatic the writer, the sooner will he suggest inner workings through superficial indications.

The first use of dialogue, as suggested, is to further action; the second use is to aid in portraying character. This order is the order of importance in the drama, in the novel and in the short-story. In advancing plot action, dialogue has specific functions. The first is to give the exposition of antecedent circumstances. This is the method which in the drama is practically always employed. There is more choice for the short-story. In some stories, the omniscient author may summarise; as in "A New England Nun," Mrs. Freeman gives the exposition after the scene between Louisa and Joe. But in other stories, the author lets the characters give the exposition. In O. Henry's "The Whirligig of Life," the antecedent particulars (which constitute reason for a divorce) are given in the dialogue between Ransie Bilbro and his wife as they stand before the justice of the peace.

"We-all," said the woman in a voice like the wind blowing through pine boughs, "wants a divo'ce." She looked at Ransie to see if he noted any flaw or ambiguity or evasion or partiality or self-partisanship in her statement of their business.

"A divo'ce," repeated Ransie, with a solemn nod. "We-all can't git along together nohow. It's lonesome enough fur to live in the mountin's when a man and a woman keers fur one another. But when she's a-spittin' like a wildcat or a-sullenin' like a hoot-owl in the cabin, a man ain't got no call to live with her."

"When he's a no 'count varmint," said the woman without any especial warmth, "a-traipsin' along of scalawags and moonshiners and a-layin' on his back pizen 'ith co'n whiskey, and a-pesterin' folks with a pack o' hungry, triflin' houn's to feed!"

The second use of dialogue in furthering action is to advance the business of the present. This is by far the most important function. In the drama the main business of dialogue is with the present scene; it is the vehicle for carrying out the action, stage business and gesture being the accessories. From the story just drawn upon, we may take also an example of dialogue used to further the action. After incidents important to the narrative, the decree of divorce has been granted:

Each stood awkwardly silent, slowly folding the guarantee of freedom. The woman cast a shy glance full of constraint at Ransie.

"I reckon you'll be goin' back up to the cabin," she said, "along 'ith the bull-cart. There's bread in the tin box settin' on the shelf. I put the bacon in the bi'lin' pot to keep the hounds from gittin' it. Don't forget to wind the clock to-night."

"You air a-goin to your brother Ed's?" asked Ransie with fine unconcern.

"I was 'lowin' to get along up thar afore night. I ain't sayin' as they'll pester theyselves any to make me welcome, but I hain't nowhar else fur to go. It's a right smart ways, and I reckon I better be goin'. I'll be a-sayin' good-bye, Ranse—that is, if you keer fur to say so."

"I don' know as anybody's a hound dog," said Ransie, in a martyr's voice, "fur to not want to say good-bye—'less you air so anxious to git away that you don't want me to say it."

Ariela was silent. She folded the five-dollar bill and her decree carefully, and placed them in the bosom of her dress. Benaja Widdup watched the money disappear with mournful eyes behind his spectacles.

And then with his next words he achieved rank (as his thoughts ran) with either the great crowd of the world's sympathisers or the little crowd of its great financiers.

"Be kind o' lonesome in the old cabin to-night, Ranse," he said.

Ransie Bilbro stared out at the Cumberlands, clear blue now in the sunlight. He did not look at Ariela.

"I 'low it might be lonesome," he said; "but when folks gits mad and wants a divo'ce, you can't make folks stay."

"There's others wanted a divo'ce," said Ariela, speaking to the wooden stool. "Besides, nobody don't want nobody to stay."

"Nobody never said they didn't."

"Nobody never said they did. I reckon I better start on now to Brother Ed's."

"Nobody can't wind that old clock."

"Want me to go back along 'ith you in the cart and wind it fur you, Ranse?"

By the end of the scene Ranse and Ariela are reunited.

The third way in which dialogue advances the action is by preparing for the future. In this respect it especially concerns itself with the throwing out of clues. In "The Revolt of 'Mother,' " Nanny says, "We might have the wedding in the new barn. Why, what makes you look so, Mother?" Mrs. Penn has conceived the idea of moving into the barn—as the reader learns by subsequent events. Meantime, the clue serves to heighten expectation. In "River Witch," Diamond Joe says to Ruby, "I'm gonter watch out for dis yar snake's mate. Hit'll come along de same route befo' sundown." Later, Smokey tells Ruby, "Well, hit (the charm) jest means dat any man which comes co'tin' at you besides you' husband is gonter run into dat spell and he gonter die. Dat's all." She continued, "But . . . . he ain't gonter die by hisse'f" (That is, he would not die a natural death). Later still, Ruby speaks "I wonder is dat yuther moccasin come crawlin' along yit?" The outcome justifies the reader's expectations aroused by these pointers.

On this matter of clues, Mr. Barry Pain has expressed himself in an interesting manner: "You must give your reader information without letting him know that you are doing it.

"Suppose that at the end of your story the villain is to throw the heroine down a well in the garden. You may describe the well at the very beginning of the story, dwelling upon its depth, its position, its picturesqueness. He will say, 'This well is not here for its health. Somebody will be going down it directly!'

"Now information about the well can be given skilfully in many ways. For instance, it is not necessary to mention it at all. If you speak of the rust from the chain

in the drinking water, and describe the old men coming through the garden with pails of water hanging from yokes, the reader will know about the well, but not know how he knows about it.

"Or the well may be put in as a side issue. You may speak of the beauty of the syringa bushes in full bloom beside the old well. Then the reader will think it's the syringa bushes you are worrying about.

"Another way is to give your reference to the well in the dialogue. Let the characters talk about it, not the novelist."

I have quoted at length to give the greater emphasis to the climax *Let the characters talk about it. Let the dialogue contain the clues.*

In furthering action, it should be noted that well-written dialogue aids swiftness of progression, but over-abundance or plethora will retard as much as masses of description or philosophy. The compensation is obvious: if a deliberate style is desired, such fulness may be employed with discretion to gain the desired effect, even at the risk of irrelevance or padding. Again, humour may be increased or suspense may be aided, in that action is held up while some character parenthesises.

In the portrayal of character, dialogue has three main functions: it reveals the character of the person speaking, the one spoken of, and the one spoken to. The principle of suggestion is again at work in this use of good dialogue: every speech conveys much more than it says, because of the subtle interaction of personalities.

William uttered a cry; he knew that he was struck, but he was not sure how or where. He was left with a

blank mind and no repartee. Again he dashed from the back room.

In the hall, near the front door, he came to a sudden halt, and Mrs. Baxter and Jane heard him calling loudly to the industrious Genesis:

"Here! You go cut the grass in the back-yard. And for heaven's sake, take that dog with you!"

"Grass awready cut roun' back," responded the amiable voice of Genesis, while the lawn-mower ceased not to whir. "Cut all 'at back-yod 's mawnin'."

"Well, you can't cut the front-yard now. Go around in the back-yard and take that dog with you."

"Nemmine 'bout 'at back-yod! Ole Clem ain' trouble nobody."

"You hear what I tell you?" William shouted. "You do what I say and you do it quick!"

Genesis laughed gaily. "I got my grass to cut!"

"You decline to do what I command you?" William roared.

"Yes, indeedy! Who pay me my wages? 'At's *my* boss. You' ma say, 'Genesis, you git all at lawn mowed b'fo sundown.' No, suh! Nee'n was'e you' bref on me, 'cause I'm got all *my* time good an' took up!"[8]

This brief passage at arms between William Sylvanus Baxter and his antagonist Genesis hardly carries on the action; it is rather an eddy in the current. But the story is essentially one of character; the boy is the centre of interest. And any of the pauses in the relation of how Silly Bill actually received his friends are compensated for in that they reveal the personality of the boy, his hopes and his dreams of the lady who deigns to become his guest.

[8] "At Home to His Friends," in *Seventeen*, by Booth Tarkington.

In Kipling's "A Second-Rate Woman," the dialogue between Mrs. Hauksbee and Mrs. Mallowe, although having for its main purpose the exposition of Mrs. Delville's character, reveals the personalities of the speakers.

Attending to the details of dialogue composition, the author should exercise judgment in choice of words used by way of explanation, or to indicate stage business. The inexperienced writer relies upon the word "said," even to point out that a question has preceded. "'What turned his hair blue?' she said." One remedy for this trouble is to prefer another word: asked, exclaimed, dashed in, whispered, sneered, interrupted, ventured, murmured, muttered, retorted, growled, wondered—or another from the long list, which the student should here extend for himself.[9] Or, and this is the more dramatic way, let the writer try to show within the speech both the speaker and the manner. Fanny Hurst's dramatic quality owes no small part of its effect to the riddance of all pointers; and it is a matter on which the author, by her own testimony, spends time and care.

In the foregoing discussion certain points have been made which should prove helpful. First, to write dialogue one must understand its nature; second, must realise the essential qualities for which to work, and, finally, must direct it to definite ends.

[9] The frequent misuse of the stock melodramatic "hiss" prompts the caution, Do not try to "hiss" a word without the *s* or *z* sound.

"'"You little fool! What did you want to come here for, then?" he hissed. Forgotten were all his traditions on lingual subtlety.—*Town Topics.*'

"Forgotten, too, the traditions of lingual sibilance."—(F. P. A.)

Exercises for Chapter XI

William Dean Howells says, in his "Criticism of Fiction," that Scott made his characters talk, "as seldom man and never woman talked." What characteristic is lacking?

What is the purpose of the dialogue between the two maids in Katharine Brush's "Him and Her"?

What part of the dialogue in "Child of God" is subjective? How do you know?

Point out the various uses of dialogue in "The Killers."

Comment on Ring W. Lardner's dialogue in "Anniversary," "Liberty Hall," and "Travelogue."

What are the chief qualities of the dialogue in Dorothy Parker's "Big Blonde," and Louis Bromfield's "The Apothecary"?

How does Richard Connell use dialogue as an indication of character in "The Most Dangerous Game," and "All in the Day's Work"?

Study Wilbur Daniel Steele's use of dialogue in "Pioneers."

Compare John Russell's "The Slaver" (In the collection, "In Dark Places") with "The Fourth Man" (in "The Red Mark"), both for plot and for the part dialogue plays in the plots.

What are the chief qualities of Thomas Beer's dialogue? (See, for example, "Tact," "Mummery," or more recent stories by this author.)

Write a dialogue between two students. Through their speeches with accompanying gesture and "business" present (1) the characters of the speakers, (2) some incident or episode.

Two motion picture fans are present at a play (drama, with living characters). Write a dialogue to reveal the nature of the play, and the characters of the speakers,

by their comparison between the "movies" and the drama, (2) between the "talkies" and the drama.

Try to convey the effect of dialogue in an exchange of radiograms between a passenger on a "round the world" Zeppelin flight and a friend in New York City. What are your difficulties?

Bernard Shaw meets William Shakespeare. Write a dialogue between them.

Two in the grand stand at a prize fight. Through dialogue present (1) the characters of the speakers, (2) the scene from their point of view (mental and physical), (3) a hint of the coming action.

Two in the college library. Through dialogue (whispered) present the discussion of important college news. (2) The librarian breaks up the dialogue. Indicate her (or his) character by the way in which she (he) intrudes. (3) The dialogue is continued in the hall outside.

Which type of story is more easily dramatized—the objectively written one or that presented from the point of view of one character? Can you form conclusions?

Chekhov once criticized a play of Gorky's, saying "it ought to be mentioned in the first or second act that she (Tatyana) has attempted to poison herself; then, after that hint, the poisoning in the third act will not seem so startling. . ." What principle of technique was Chekhov illustrating?

CHAPTER XII

THE EMOTIONAL ELEMENT

1. *Tragedy.* The office of tragedy; fear and pity two members of a class; first essentials for emotional reaction; value of restraint; illustrations; tools of emotion; consideration of fear; Poe's appeal; his successors; death, and the maimed body; attendant circumstances; sounds; curiosity provoked by disguise; consideration of pity; Bret Harte; his successors; illustrations; love as a motive; renunciation; situations that draw sympathy; tragic incident most real; value of technique.
2. *Comedy.* Cause, source, and object of laughter; superiority; exuberance of spirits; incongruity; appreciation of humour; burlesque; requirements of burlesque writer; humour of character and situation; illustrations; irony; turn of tables; illustrations.

1. *Tragedy*

"As for the proper function [of Tragedy]," said Aristotle, "it is to arouse the emotions of pity and fear in the audience; and to arouse this pity and fear in such a way as to effect that special relief of these two emotions which is the characteristic of Tragedy." It is a far call from Greek dramatist and critic to twentieth century playwright and critic; from the theatres of ancient Athens to those of Broadway. But tragedy, with its effect upon the sensibilities, exists now as then and universally. "The playwright has his audience at a distinct advantage[1] It comes to the theatre for a definite purpose, to have its emotions

[1] The Mechanics of Emotion, by George J. Nathan and George M. Cohan, *McClure's,* November, 1913.

played upon; this experience gives such exquisite delight and satisfaction, indeed, that the average citizen is willing to pay liberally for it." In the first chapter of this book, art was defined with emphasis on its primary function, that of moving the emotion. It matters not what the emotion may be: pity and fear are but two members of the general class ranging from simplest feeling to complexes of feeling—as from mild wonder to a complex of admiration, regret and pity. The play, the story, the statue, the musical number, any example of art may be excellent technically; but without the breath of life it is only dead matter. Art begins where the "wee bit" begins, as the Russian artist said, who by a touch had quickened the dead work of a student. The final cause of this divergence between the technician and the artist, O. Henry has illustrated in "The Plutonian Fire":

"Pettit brought me his returned manuscripts and we looked them over to find out why they were not accepted. They seemed to me pretty fair stories, written in a good style, and ended, as they should, at the bottom of the last page.

"They were well constructed and the events were marshalled in orderly and logical sequence. But I thought I detected a lack of living substance—it was much as if I gazed at a symmetrical array of presentable clamshells from which the succulent and vital inhabitants had been removed."

After Pettit had been advised to become better acquainted with his theme, he fell in love. Under the influence of his own passion, he wrote a story of "sentimental drivel." There was now an overplus where formerly there had been a lack. After he was cured, he wrote

stories just short of good enough; that is, the emotional experience was not without value for his creative efforts. But having observed the passion of another, while he himself went heart-whole, he felt he could do a great story. And he did. His past experience joined to his present observation and sympathy turned the trick:

"Just as though it lay there, red and bleeding, a woman's heart was written into the lines. You couldn't see the joining, but art, exquisite art, and pulsing nature had been combined into a love story that took you by the throat like the quinsy."

The author need not coldly profit by the feeling of another living person as Pettit felt he had done; rather must he feel the feeling of his own creation and sympathise. And this knowledge of his character's emotions, and his sympathy with that character, are the two-fold requisites, and the prime requisites, for seizing the reader in an emotional grip. The high art of Daudet's "Last Class" consists of the direct appeal made by the old French Master, who after forty years of service found it necessary to leave Alsace forever.

"He had the courage, however, to go on with the class to the end. After the writing, we had the lesson in history; then the little ones sang all together the ba, be, bi, bo, bu. Yonder at the back of the room, old Hauser had put on his spectacles, and holding his spelling-book in both hands, he spelled out the letters with them. He, too, was visibly applying himself. His voice shook with emotion, and it was so funny to hear him that we all longed to laugh and to cry. Ah! I shall remember that last lesson.

"Suddenly the church clock struck twelve, then the Angelus rang. At the same moment the bugles of the Prussians returning from drill blared under our windows. M. Hamel rose, pale as death from his chair. Never had he seemed to me so tall.

" 'My friends,' he said, 'my friends, I—I——'

"But something suffocated him. He could not finish the sentence.

"Thereupon he turned to the black-board, took a piece of chalk, and, bearing on it with all his might, he wrote in the largest letters he could:

" 'Vive la France!'

"Then he stood there, with his head pressed against the wall, and, without speaking, he motioned to us with his hand:

" 'That is all; go.' "

He must be a cold and callous reader who does not respond to the suffering in the old Frenchman's heart. That the picture is presented by Daudet with restraint is the more effective. The good taste by which an author lets facts speak for themselves, presenting them objectively and with simplicity of expression, contributes to strength of impression. Dickens, who was unable to sleep because of the sorrows of Little Nell, indulges at her death in rhetorical abandon which conveys a mawkish and sentimental feeling, rather than dignified sentiment. Chekhov's practice of letting the facts speak for themselves may be illustrated by almost any of his stories which embody tragic events, and by his remark in a letter to Madame Avilov: "You may weep and moan over your stories, you may suffer together with your heroes, but so that the reader does not notice it. The more objective,

the stronger the effect." Again, "When you depict sad or unlucky people, and want to touch the reader's heart, try to be colder; give their grief a background, as it were . . . " Restraint should characterise likewise the presentation of those incidents which appeal to the sense of fear. Irvin S. Cobb's "An Occurrence Up a Side Street" tells its dénouement with fine brevity and without comment:

"She put the glass down steadily enough on the table; but into her eyes came the same puzzled, baffled look that his wore, and almost gently she slipped down into the chair facing him.

"Then her jaw lolled a little, too, and some of the other flies came buzzing toward her."

Marion Crawford in "The Dead Smile" draws a charnel-house picture which in its naturalistic and hideous detail surpasses melodrama. The reader feels more like succumbing to the laughter of hysteria than to the shudder of revulsion as he finishes the chapter wherein the skull of old Vernon Ockam drops off the dead body and rolls grinning on the floor, wherein his son Gabriel opens the winding sheet about Sir Hugh and struggles with the claw-like fingers which seem to close more tightly . . . "and when he pulled harder the shrunken hands and arms rose from the corpse with a horrible look of life following his motion." Such exaggeration, of whatever tragic picture, act, or situation, strains the capacity of the audience or reader for tragic effect; as under-stimulation leaves the hearer indifferent, over-stimulation pushes beyond the mark to a less noble reaction than the one sought. Experience the emotion, but beware of loquacity.

Feeling the emotion, however, is not a warrant for transmitting it to the reader. Without the technique of his art the writer is handicapped. He may be swayed by feeling, and yet, lacking the "tools of emotion," find himself unable to sway his readers. Now, playing upon the emotions is effected by mechanical devices dependent for their success upon certain psychological bases. If we are normal, we are all moved by the same things. We are all thrilled at the same things, "we all cry at the same things, laugh at the same things, and the expedients for producing thrills, laughter, and tears are so artless and simple that under ordinary circumstances we should indignantly repudiate the suggestion that they could move us. But the playwright knows exactly what they are. His predecessors used them over and over again; his successors will use them to the end of time."[2] No less than the play-producer, the story writer must know his "bag of tricks" if he meets with success in his appeal. He lacks the stage, but in so far as his story is dramatic just so far will he be able to employ dramatic methods of producing mechanically the desired relation.

Let us examine briefly the nature of Fear, the one universal and uncontrollable passion, possessed alike by man and the lower animals and let us observe the nature of the objects, characteristics and situations which appeal to the sense of fear and kindred emotions.

"Real fear," says De Maupassant, "is a sort of reminiscence of fantastic terrors of the past. An energetic man never is afraid in the presence of great danger; he is aroused, excited, full of anxiety. But fear is something quite different . . . when one is brave he feels it neither under fire, nor in the presence of sure death, nor in the

[2] See further, "The Mechanics of Emotion," cited above.

face of any well-known danger." Again in commenting on the nature of the horrible, he distinguishes it from the terrible. "A frightful accident upsets, terrifies. In order that you should experience horror, something more is needed than emotion, something more than the spectacle of a dreadful death; there must be a shuddering sense of mystery, or a sensation of abnormal terror more than natural."[3] Now, if we glance at the work of the early story writers, we shall find that the more elementally tragic stories make their appeal through the horrible, the gruesome, the decadent, straight to the sense of fear, with attendant loathing or disgust. The act of fearing may be vicarious, the reader may be afraid for some character in the story only. But the horror may become so real as to secure from the reader a very definite personal reaction. "The Black Cat," "Berenice," "The Tell-tale Heart," and "Ligeia" are examples of Poe's stories which appeal through the morbid and the gruesome. "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemaar," "Loss of Breath," and "A Premature Burial" bring the reek of death and the stench of decay too violently to the reader to harmonise with dictates of good taste. "The Cask of Amontillado" I regard as Poe's best tragedy. It holds the reader by its recountal of inevitable and awful revenge, from the initial words. The ominous first sentence provokes sure expectation of impending doom; the enticement of Fortunato arouses suspense, the actual occupation of walling him up thrills; the placing of the last brick compels a sense of finality, and the re-erection of the rampart of bones closes the incident. Poe creates here, as elsewhere, a feeling of apprehension, and satisfies expectancy by fulfilment of

[3] "Fear," and "The Horrible."

tragic promise. His subject is death, and he runs the range: from possible death, as in "A Descent into the Maelstrom" and "The Pit and the Pendulum"; through the accomplishment of death, as in "The Cask," to the decay of the dead body or its exhumation as in "Valdemaar" or "Berenice," even to resurrection and metempsychosis in "Ligeia." In his poetry he chose the nobler aspects of death; he made his poetic appeal through beauty, awe and mystery. But in his stories I do not recall an instance of death used in any way other than to thrill, to shock or to disgust. Obviously, the physical aspect of death in its most repellent phases is the first and most important consideration for the working of the primitive passion of fear.

Have the successors of Poe shunned his methods? Is it still possible to use the devices he employed without bringing an hysterical over-charge of feeling? In general, they are still used but with a difference in the fictive type, according as the narrative may be psychologically fine or melodramatically gross. The degree of skill employed in manipulating the devices, combined with the author's purpose, determines to what type of mentality the story will at last appeal. Edith Wharton's "The Duchess at Prayer" thrills by the suggested walling up, even as "The Cask" thrills; but it emphasises motive and interplay of character rather than the horrors of entombment. Poe reverses the order of emphasis. Marion Crawford's "The Dead Smile," which has been mentioned as an extreme example of appeal to the sense of fear, visualises too frightfully the loathsome details of the crypt. And these two stories may fitly stand as antipodal tragedies in modern story writing. Thomas Bailey Al-

drich satirises the melodramatic extreme in "A Struggle for Life." Deliberately overshooting the mark in the tragic appeal of his inner story, he puts an envelope around it to explain it as the stock tale of a gentleman of literary proclivities, slightly demented from brooding on the great American novel.

Among stories making a legitimate tragic, rather than melodramatic appeal, through death and the dead body, Joseph Conrad's "The Inn of the Two Witches" and Irvin S. Cobb's "An Occurrence Up a Side Street" deserve study. Among the most dignified of contemporary instances is Sherwood Anderson's "Death in the Woods."

Next in order to the dead body, objects addressing themselves to the sense of fear are: ghosts, the maimed body, and the accessories of death. Of these, the first is so important in many ways as to have given vogue to a distinct type of story. It is perhaps less necessary to mention specific examples of the maimed body than it is to emphasise the fact that best writers also use it with restraint and true tragic effect. "Beyond the Pale" remains in the reader's memory largely because of the two sentences: "From the black dark, Bisesa held out her arms into the moonlight. Both hands had been cut off at the wrists, and the stumps were nearly healed." An amateur or a sensational writer would have drawn a finished picture; Poe might have done so. Kipling makes the reader draw it, and therein he is the better artist. In "Because of the Dollars," Joseph Conrad depicts a villainous character who, after having caught the reader's attention with his stumps of hands, holds attention by attaching a stone to the stumps. Later, he tests the efficacy of the arrangement by attempting murder. In

"Arabesque: The Mouse," A. E. Coppard suggests horror, pity, and a whole philosophy of pessimism by duplicating the effect of severed members. Katherine Fullerton Gerould employs a maltreated body in "Vain Oblations," one of the secrets of whose drawing power is the consummate treatment of the physically horrible. Many stories since 1918 have used the maimed body for bringing home the horror of war.

Accessories of death serve various purposes, from arousing the reader's expectancy, as the trowel in "The Cask" whets it, to aiding verisimilitude, as the swathing bandages in "Ligeia" help to create the picture. In "The Pit and the Pendulum" the descending axe and all the inquisitional traps are suggestive of death. In "An Occurrence" Irvin S. Cobb makes a significant tool out of a steel hat pin, and he holds the breath of his reader until the tool is effective. In Cynthia Stockley's "The Molmeit of the Mountain," the whetting of the knife makes the reader run hot and cold—knife-whetting has thrilled the playhouse audience since Shylock's case in court. In Hardy's "The Three Strangers," the suggestion of death in the person of the hangman is so strong as to hold the reader spellbound.

Among other exciting forces may be mentioned signs and omens. Thirteen at table, an instance of hypnotism, a witch's prophecy, a curse, an object that has had a spell put upon it, crystal gazing—all appeal to the reader's superstition, either active or dormant, which awaits the fulfilment of the omen or the working of the spell. In addition to the list of objects the nature of which induces fear, and the student should complete the list for himself, certain attendant circumstances aid or intensify

the effect. Darkness, lightning, thunder and rain, for example, are the conventional accompaniment of crime, ghosts, grave-robbing and wizard demonstrations. The omission of the convention may be made for a preferred contrast, which heightens by its more novel use. "On the Brighton Road" ends in a startlingly original manner, but prefers the conventional darkness for the ghostly visitation:

"It was dark when he woke, and started trudging once more through the slushy roads.

"Two miles beyond Reigate a figure, a fragile figure, slipped out of the darkness to meet him.

" 'On the road, guv'nor?' said a husky voice. 'Then I'll come a bit of the way with you if you don't walk too fast. It's a bit lonesome walking this time of day.'

" 'But the pneumonia!' cried the tramp aghast.

" 'I died at Crawley this morning,' said the boy."

The ghosts in "The Turn of the Screw" appear in broad daylight, startling the reader into accepting their ghostships.

Of sounds which contribute to agitate the reader there are varieties: habitual and unexpected, low and high, soft and shrill. The stories of Irving which most grip the average youngster are not "Rip" and "The Legend," but "Dolph Heyliger's Ghost" and "The Student of Salamanca." The *auto da fé* probability in the latter romance whets the appetite of the young savage; the "tramp, tramp, tramp" of Dolph's ghost pleasantly "scares" him, as does the tapping of the blind man's cane in Stevenson's "Treasure Island." Tramping and tapping have a climax in knocking. And as the porter disturbed Mac-

beth and his Lady, so did the jovial gentleman break in upon the security of Markheim. By its direct appeal any sound is probably more effective on the stage than it can be in a story where it must work indirectly. But the representation is proportionately as valuable for the story as the actual sound is for the stage. Marion Crawford's "The Screaming Skull" illustrates the fact that even in the story the effect of a represented cry may approach that of the real.

The writer should find the fit and apt detail, as a curiosity inciting force, to integrate with his major cause of tragic excitement. For example, disguise in any form is as old as the Greeks. In connection with the marred or disfigured face, a mask has often provoked curiosity. Hawthorne wrote a masterpiece in "The Minister's Black Veil"; Katherine Fullerton Gerould used swathing muslins with fine restraint in "The Toad and the Jewel." Eugene O'Neill's "The Great God Brown" was a nine days wonder, chiefly for the symbolism of the masks.

In briefly calling attention to the objects and attendant conditions which appeal to the sense of fear, it is to be understood that the present writer recommends not one of them unless the student wishes to excite, to horrify, to hold the reader's breath, or to make him shudder in revulsion. If he does wish such an effect, he must go boldly to these or to their kindred. But the appeal to fear and similar emotions is less noble than the appeal to pity and related emotions; and after understanding the operation of the more primitive elements, the student will do better to work for the effect which is created by a more laudable purpose.

As was illustrated by way of introduction to this

chapter, tragic objects, characteristics, and situations may invoke also pity or compassion. The difference in reaction arises from different treatment, with emphasis on particulars and combinations not found in the grosser appeal. The entire motivation is different; the whole purpose of the author is directed to another end. For example, let us take death, which we placed first as a fear-producing agent. Just as certain aspects address themselves to fear, loathing or disgust, so other aspects or treatment may "purge the emotions" in the best sense of the term. Working historically, we began with Poe and ended with contemporary writers, to illustrate the employment of the horrible. In like manner let us begin with the first American short-story writer who elicited tears from his readers. "The Luck of Roaring Camp" has been called the most popular short-story ever written. It has the elements which solicit universal sympathy: it opens with the death of an outcast woman and the birth of the Luck; it closes with the death of the Luck and his best friend. Between beginning and end the author emphasizes the contrast between the child and his rough surroundings, shows his influence on the miners, his quaint lovableness, and illustrates anew that "A little child shall lead them." Three deaths set the pathetic element uppermost; but sympathy and tenderness first had to be aroused, else the deaths would have been mere uncanny facts. So in "Tennessee's Partner" the love and grief of the Partner find an answering chord in the heart of the reader. So in "The Outcasts" the despair of the party compels pity, as the death of Oakhurst moves the reader to regret and something akin to admiration.

When is death the saddest thing? Poe asked and

answered in "The Philosophy of Composition." When a bereft one is left to mourn, he thought. The partner mourns Tennessee, and the Innocent remains to mourn Piney. Quiller-Couch's "The Drawn Blind" makes its impress through the mother left solitary by the execution of her only son. "La Mère Sauvage" employe the same family relation. Stephen Morehouse Avery's "Never in This World" is an excellent instance of a father and daughter story, in which the father is bereft. The grief of the mother for the son is as old in story as the sorrow of Mary; the grief of the father for the son is found in the tale of David and Absalom; the grief of father for daughter is poignant in the story of Jephtha. Such instances are universal in time and place. But there may be other answers to the question, When is death the saddest thing? And if the writer can find a novel instance of what to him seems saddest, he is far on his way to the reader's sympathy. Death after renunciation of some ideal or dream, death of an innocent person supposed guilty, and other answers have found exemplification in short-stories. Katherine Mansfield's "Life of Ma Parker," and Stefan Zweig's "A Failing Heart" appeal through their respective treatments of grief and death in defeat.

Love, as a motive, may prompt a person to surrender his life, to suffer life-long imprisonment, to renounce for another's sake something dearer than life. "The Substitute," by Coppée, illustrates the statement, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend." F. Tennyson Jesse's "Greater Love" is an even more poignant instance. "The Bunker Mouse," by Frederick Stuart Greene, presents a derelict redeeming his past in

saving the life of his daughter's husband; Bret Harte's "Miggles" devotes her own life to taking care of the wreck of a man. Connolly's "The Trawler" and Norman Duncan's "The Last Shot in the Locker" present admirable examples of death from sacrifice; the hero in each story voluntarily transferred his own clothing to another and in so doing gave up his own life. The latter story presents with grim realism a picture of men freezing solid on the ice fields off Labrador. Old Jonathan fights to save Toby, his grandson. As a last resort, he calls the narrator, Tumm.

"Heed me, Tumm. An' mark well what I says. I 'low a dead man's clothes would be cold an' damp anyhow. The lad needs a shift o' warm clothes. An' I'm warm, Tumm. An' my underclothes is dry. I been warm and dry all day long, an' wonderful strong an' wakeful, too, with the fear o' losin' Toby. I'll jus' go away a little piece an' lie down an' die. I'm tired an' dull. It won't take long. An' you'll strip me, Tumm, while I'm still warm."

"It might do," says I.

" 'Tis the only sensible thing t' do."

"Nothin' else t' do?"

"No; nothin' else t' do that I can think of right now."

I couldn't thing o' nothin' else t' do.

" 'Tis hard for you, Jonathan," says I.

"Oh, no!" says he. "I don't mind."

"Then make haste," says I.

"Don't waste no heat," says he. "Fetch Toby alongside jus' as soon as I'm gone an' strip me afore I'm cold."

"Ay," says I. "That's a good idea."

"An' you keep Toby alive somehow, Tumm," says he, "God help you!"

"I will."

Jonathan moved away.

"Watch where I goes," says he. "Don't lose me. I won't be far."

An' then Toby:

"Where you goin', gran'pa?" says he.

Jonathan stopped dead. He turned. An' he made back toward Toby. An' then he stopped dead again.

"I'm jus' goin' t' look for somethin'," says he.

"What you goin' t' look for?"

"I'm goin' t' find a shift o' warm clothes for you."

"A dead man, gran'pa?"

"Ay; a dead man."

"Don't be long," says Toby. "I'll miss you."

"I'm glad o' that," says Jonathan.

"You might get lost in the snow," says Toby. "Hurry up. I'll wait here."

"I'll be back jus' as quick as I'm able," says Jonathan. "You wait here, Toby, an' mind Mister Tumm, won't you, while I'm gone?"

"Ay, sir. An' I'll keep movin' jus' the same as if you was here. Hurry up."

By an' by, when I thought 'twas time, I went t' where Jonathan was lyin'.

"Is you dead?" says I.

"Not yet," says he. "Come back in a few minutes."

Pretty soon I went back.

"Is you dead?" says I.

"Not yet," says he. "I'm makin' poor work of it."

An' I went once more.

"Is you dead?"

"I'm goin' fast."

An' yet again.

"Is you dead?"

An' he was dead.

'Twas worth doin. It saved Toby Farr alive from that gale. 'Twas no easy thing t' clothe un anew in the wind—him weepin' for his dead gran'pa an' wantin' t' lie down an' die by his side. Newf'un'land-born, an' used t' weather, he lived through the night.

An' when Cap'n Saul gathered the dead from the ice in the quiet weather o' the nex' mornin' the lad was carried aboard an' stowed away, frostbit in a sad way, yet bound t' hang on t' life. He said never a word about his gran'pa then. Nor did he weep any more. Nor did he ask me any questions. But he brooded. An' I wondered what he was thinkin' so deep about.

An' then we put into port—flag at half-mast an' a hundred an' twenty-one men piled for'ard like cordwood. An' Toby Farr come on deck, clad in his gran'pa's clothes, an' watched the dead go ashore until his gran'pa went by, wrapped in a union jack.

"Mister Tumm!" says he.

"Ay, Toby?"

"Did my gran'pa gimme his clothes?"

"He did."

"I'll be worthy!" says he.

An' he've growed up since then. An' he is worthy.[4]

Renunciation whether of life, of worldly goods, love, or revenge, though of ancient origin is not fossilised for purposes of fiction. It is coeternal with life, and whatever associates itself with life offers possible material for literature. In "A White Heron," Sylvia gives up the sum of ten dollars—to her a small fortune—rather than betray the white heron. In "Patches,"[5] a "wretched

[4] This selection occurs, with certain changes, in Chapter XLI of Billy Topsail, M.D., Fleming H. Revell Company.

[5] Short Stories from Life, with an Introduction by Thomas L. Masson.

human" refuses a thousand dollars for his wretched beast. This story found high place in a contest, doubtless because of the universal appeal made by the renunciation. Such appeal strikes a chord of admiration, because in a struggle between two ends the character has chosen the worthier. "Christmas Eve on Lonesome" first stirs the reader to fear, then to pity for Buck, who refrains from shooting Jim. Buck renounces revenge for the sake of the wife and child. The heroine of Miss Jewett's "Marsh Rosemary" leaves her husband to the second wife, without letting either know that she has viewed the family scene from her post outside the window. The Enoch Arden situation rarely fails to elicit sympathy.

The maimed body also becomes a cause for pity when found in conjunction with bravery and fineness of character, and when emphasis is placed on the irony of the contrast; Amory Hare's "Sung in the Street"[6] is a worthy attempt to stir the reader through this combination. Characters otherwise moving to pity are victims of misunderstanding or circumstance, of unrequited love, of false systems of justice; characters who are brave under declining power. And it must be remembered that pity is closely akin to admiration, regret, love and kindred emotions. "The Regent's Wager," for example, presents an instance of death occurring when it might have been prevented. "Oh, the pity of it!" the reader exclaims, but perhaps the strongest element in the "feeling complex" is that of unavailing regret. When Mère Sauvage stands against the burning ruins of her house, to be riddled by Prussian bullets, the reader admires her superb indifference to death as

[6] *Harper's Bazar,* February, 1929.

he was shocked at her cremation of the soldiers. In all likelihood he feels no pity, sheds no tears.

In striving for emotional reaction, the author needs to ask himself, "What moves me most?" For if he is affected by a cause in actual life different from these in representations of life the chances are in favour of his handling it to better advantage. He may, for example, feel that "The Luck of Roaring Camp" has too much of the Dickens sort of sentiment; that it has overshot its mark. He may be moved, rather, by a situation in which some character receives reward after hardship in adherence to duty, a good example of which is found in Richard Harding Davis's "The Consul." To move men in the greatest degree, the author must use tragic incident. "Under the scheme of the universe it is the tragic things that seem most real," writes Melville Davisson Post; "Things pleasing and comfortable do not strike us with the same emotions of pity and fear as do things terrible and tragic. Moreover, as Taine says, we must deal with tragic incidents to produce our greatest effects, because it is the tragic incident that epitomises life."

Having decided, then, what moves himself most, or what he believes to have the most nearly universal appeal, the author should gather such attendant conditions and motivations as will strengthen the appeal of his concrete choice. Nor should he forget that he must address himself to the intellect in order to reach the emotion. Unless the reader "believes" or is convinced of the truth of what he reads, it cannot move him greatly. And, finally, it must be admitted that having striven through his own feeling, the feelings of his characters, and through em-

ployment of all technical "tools of emotion," the writer may not quite succeed. He may achieve technical correctness, and fall short of the contagion" or ignition which takes place only when he discovers the wee bit of under- or over-emphasis, and evaluates correctly the infinitely minute degrees. Otherwise, he may interest by his skill, but he does not move. The value of teaching art—the technique of an art—is that it places an instrument in a man's hand which he may use nobly when the time comes. A good instance may be adduced from Turgenev's "Nobleman's Nest." Old Lemm, a German musician and teacher, plays technically well—he does not more. One night, under the influence of a strong unselfish emotion in the happiness of the lovers, into which his fondness for Lisa has given him insight, he plays in a way that moves his unsuspected hearer to rapture. But if he had not first known the use of his instrument, how could he have expressed his emotion?

2. *Comedy*

Why do we laugh, at what, and when? The answers of psychologists and philosophers to these and similar questions bear information pertinent to the writer of fiction. For although analysis of the comic appeal offers small constructive help, yet it may at least suggest a channel into which a writer's spirits may find outlet. "Sudden glory," says Hobbes,[7] "is the passion which maketh those grimaces called laughter; and is caused either by some sudden act of men, that pleaseth them; or by the apprehension of some deformed thing in another, by compari-

[7] Leviathan, Part I, Ch. vi.

son whereof they suddenly applaud themselves." That is to say, men laugh from the feeling of superiority. Bergson, separated by three hundred years from Hobbes, declares that "the ridiculous is present where the automatic is detected in the flexible spirit of the living." The divergence in the cause for laughter argues for greater charity in the twentieth century; but the feeling of superiority is still a condition. An inferiority not native to the object causes laughter from the superior observer. Boris Sidis, in his "Psychology of Laughter," discusses at length the nature of the ludicrous. "We laugh at others when we find them wanting. . . . What is not customary, is not usual, is laughed at . . . old worn out ideals, beliefs, are subject for laughter. Whenever we can prick a vital point in our neighbour . . . there we find the ludicrous. . . . We laugh because we feel superior."

Addison asserts that laughter is an elation arising in man, from his comparing himself with an object below him, whether it be a natural or an artificial fool. From Addison to Stephen Leacock, whose essay on humour the student should read, English humourists grant that superiority is a first condition for laughter.

But not all superior persons laugh: exuberance of spirits is necessary to its expression. We laugh in play; the play instinct must be dominant. And, finally, as superiority is a condition, and exuberance of energy the source, so some element of incongruity must effect the release of energy. The incongruous is everywhere; but not every one can see it, or make another see it. If the foregoing things are true, the statement of George Eliot that a difference in the appreciation of humour is a strain

on the affections is easy to rationalise. Not all persons are superior or superior in equal degree; not all are accustomed to the same things; not all simultaneously see certain beliefs outworn; not all have the same exuberance of spirits. Humour varies from horse play to subtle humouristics; the extremes of the scale are not, however, common to everybody. An appeal to humour, therefore, is one of the best means of finding what a person is by finding what he likes. Highest humour delights in the ludicrous only when sympathy is present with the inferior object or persons ridiculed. The laughter in humour, then, acts as a relief to the emotions in the way described by Aristotle in the case of tragedy; it establishes a ground of human sympathy.

Among the forms of humour, burlesque is unique in that it imitates for the purpose of deriding. It, therefore, finds easy operation in the mimicry of art as opposed to the imitation of nature. The creative ability of the art-imitator need not be so great as that of the one who selects from life itself the laughable and holds it up to ridicule in some original example of his own; but if he creates a high order of burlesque, he will find appreciation by those who read and think. For example, only a person who has read Omar's "Rubaiyat" and felt its unique quality in matter and manner will care a whit about the parody. Who that has not read "Jane Eyre" would laugh over Bret Harte's "Miss Mix"? Of burlesque humorists the most prolific today is Stephen Leacock, whose "Hero in Homespun" provided an apt illustration at this point in the first edition of "A Handbook on Story Writing." That illustration is still good, but a new one will

be more timely. "One Crowded Quarter Second" jests at the movies:

"Take, for example, Hamlet. All the world knows how the sorrow accumulates. Hamlet's father murdered, even before the play begins; his mother married to his uncle; Polonius stabbed; Ophelia drowned; Hamlet himself half-crazy; his uncle killed; Yorick's skull mislaid; Laertes about to kill Hamlet—in short, a quite serious situation.

But that wonderful quarter-second of the movies would straighten it all out. Try this, for example:

YET EVEN HERE LOVE SNATCHES THIS WAYWARD SOUL FROM FATE——

And what do you see? Hamlet sitting beside Ophelia —she was not drowned, only got muddy and since has had time to wash—in the gardens of the palace; and in another moment we find, smiling at them, his uncle, the King, no longer wicked; in fact, he says himself:

WE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER, HAM,

and near them, playing on the grass, the inevitable child, only this time it is Hamlet's and Ophelia's. And you realize that the murder and the poisoning was only a DREAM of one of the characters, and that since a quarter-second has passed and life has moved on and everything is alright."[8]

To create burlesque of literature, the writer must keep an eye on his audience; must have keen appreciation that a particular type has been overworked, or that it is absurd in one or more particulars; he must exaggerate those

[8] These paragraphs are reprinted from Short Circuits, by Permission of the publishers, Dodd, Mead and Company.

absurdities or salient charcteristics, that he may reveal them to the reader as unmistakably outworn, and at the same time must adhere closely enough to something of the original—fact, mood, rhythm, story—to make his "hit." Besides finding in verse or story material for burlesque, Stephen Leacock has gone often to life itself, finding his subjects in characters and situations. "Short Circuits" includes, for example, "Save Me From My Friends," among these friends being the deadbeat, the reporter, and the man with a speech to make. "People We Know" are the man in the pullman car, the man with the adventure story, and the people just back from Europe. In the last named skit, the author illustrates through dialogue that Americans have a good time in Europe when they are flanked and headed by other Americans and find all the American food they wish; they feel then that they can come home and write on the "National Characteristics of the European Nations."

No writer of today excels Ring W. Lardner in ironic humor, not infrequently tinged with bitterness or sadness, growing from character. Mr. Lardner's way is to let his men and women talk; talking, they proclaim themselves, and in the proclamation inform us of our own superiority. "Travelogue" is one of many instances: Hazel and Mildred meet Chapman on a train bound for San Francisco. Not once does the author state or even imply his own opinion of any of the three; here and there the characters speak of one another but for the most part they speak of and for themselves. The reader soon grasps that Hazel is a liar of a harmless sort, bent on elevating her own attractions and depressing those of Mildred; that Chapman is a vulgarian and a bore, relating

to the *n*th time the tale of his extracted tooth, and that Mildred is the only one of the three who has a thought. We smile from the recognition that we have met these travelers and believe ourselves superior; we are saddened —slightly, but saddened—that we must admit this to be a world of mediocrity.

"Contract" shows the revenge one Shelton took, when criticized for his bridge playing, by calling attention to the far from flawless English used by his persecutors. "The Golden Honeymoon" narrates the adventures of an old couple from New Jersey, who go to Florida by way of celebrating their fiftieth anniversary. Told by the near-octogenarian, the story progresses from the moment the two entered the compartment "a shut in room by itself, and got a wash bowl" (a compartment, by the way, they could afford through the generosity of the son-in-law who paid the difference between a section and a compartment) to the time they got back to Trenton at 11:01 p. m. The progress is checked in the main by petty observations of the simple, kindly old narrator, whose dialect adds to his unconsciously produced smiles; again, the limitations and the foibles of the outworn might draw tears from a peculiarly sympathetic reader.

Humour of character is distinct from humour of situation, but the two usually walk hand in hand. For instance, brogue or dialect is an indication that the person using it has not adapted himself to the speech standard: he is so far inferior, from the point of view of one who adheres to a known standard. If the dialect speaker, then, is placed in a situation where by contrast his deficiency is notably incongruous, the opportunity is good for humorous effect. Almost any story of negro dialect

illustrates the truth of this statement. Likewise, persons and things of important and solemn aspect shown to be really unimportant, for example, the hypocrite, are subjects of laughter. Booth Tarkington has treated with justice the affected clergyman in the person of Mr. Kinosling. First, his preciosity is attacked in the situation which represents him as being presented to Penrod:

" 'How do you do, my little lad,' said Mr. Kinosling, 'I trust we shall become fast friends.'

"To the ear of his little lad, it seemed he said, 'A trost we shall bick-home fawst frainds.' Mr. Kinosling's pronunciation was, in fact, slightly precious. . . ."

Later, his vanity of person displays itself:

. . . " 'Yes, for me a book, a volume in the hand, held lightly between the fingers.'

"Mr. Kinosling looked pleasantly at his fingers as he spoke, waving his hand in a curving gesture which brought it into the light of a window faintly illumined from the interior of the house." . . .

Later, still, his vanity of accomplishment finds an outlet in his recitation of Longfellow's poems. The climax of the travesty arrives with his request for his "bowler hat," which he places, besmeared with tar, upon his head. The unexpected situation reduces his seeming superiority to a helplessness whereat the reader, as well as Penrod, rejoices.

To the humour of characterisation, irony frequently contributes a large fund. If the butt of irony is unconscious of the irony, the greater the chances for success

with the forces of ridicule. The immortal deliciousness of Dogberry lies in his words: "Oh, that he were here to write me down an ass! But, masters, remember that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass." The man who is pretentious, conceited, arrogant, foolish, shallow or vain is the man whom the humorous writer may safely use as a target for the shafts of ridicule.

The situation, it will be noticed, for reducing the superior person to an inferior position, usually consists of some turn of the tables. "He fell into the pit he dug for some one else," "The fooler was fooled," "The biter was bit," "They got the best of him"—these and other colloquial expressions connote some situation which has a possible comic development.

It is easy to reduce to formula plans for certain of the instances falling under the general change of fortune type. A is defiant of B (B may be A's wife, or his enemy, or his employer—a school-boy enemy, more definitely). A waxes loud in threats against B—when B is absent. When B appears, A draws back in terror, or meekness. Then B will execute what A threatened. Or A may plan to trick B, but be tricked in turn or even before he has carried out his plan. An illustration from the short-story field is Jacobs's "The Changeling." The case of George Henshaw is not extreme; one knows he never would pursue violent measures with Mrs. Henshaw. But his failure to deceive her becomes the more laughable because of his hurried retreat. He shows himself inferior. When Mrs. Henshaw ultimately turns the tables against him, she draws another laugh from the reader. Mr. Jacobs has so leavened his characters that although

the humour for the reader arises out of a situation wherein the man was worsted, yet sympathy is with the man. Most of this author's situations may be reduced, in the final analysis, to some instance of turning the tables, or some unexpected recoil of the boomerang. "Lawyer Quince," "Back to Back," "The Weaker Vessel," "The Love Knot," "The Lady of the Barge," "The Golden Venture"—these all exemplify it in marked degree. Meredith's "The Case of General Ople and Lady Camper," in its gradual shifting of the balance of power from the general to the lady is an instance, in high comedy, of turning the tables. In Bret Harte's "Colonel Starbottle for the Plaintiff," the chief source of satisfaction is in the turning of the tables against Adoniram Hotchkiss. A deacon is, in his way, a superior person; his condescending to mark passages of scripture by way of love-making marks him as really inferior. The incongruity is pronounced. Likewise the incongruity between the Colonel's impassioned manner and his ludicrous appearance as he demonstrates the interesting features of his argument is a cause for mirth.

Any author not wholly lacking a sense of humour can devise humorous situations. If he can reach the feeling of superiority, and if he can release laughter by some incongruity, he has learned the trick of producing fun. And there's the rub.

Exercises for Chapter XII

How are you moved by the following stories? "Young Archimedes," by Aldous Huxley; "Hunger," by James Stephens; "All of the Evidence," and "Behind the Door," by Gouverneur Morris; "Butterflies," by Rose Sidney;

"The Witch Woman," by John Russell; "The Flower of Spain," by Joseph Hergesheimer; "There Are Smiles," by Ring W. Lardner; "The Little Girl from Town," by Ruth Suckow; "Defeat," by John Galsworthy; "Carrie Snyder," by Barry Benefield; "The Doll's House," by Katherine Mansfield; "Home Is the Sailor," by Bill Adams; "An Episode at Pintail Lake," by Irvin S. Cobb; "The Hands of the Enemy," by Charles Caldwell Dobie; "Big Blonde," by Dorothy Parker; "Bill," by Zona Gale; "Bubbles," by Wilbur Daniel Steele; "Death in the Woods," by Sherwood Anderson; "The Red Rooster," by Julia Peterkin; and "Where Their Fire Is Not Quenched," by May Sinclair.

What are the provocations to a sense of horror in Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Footfalls," John Russell's "The Fourth Man," and "The Slaver"?

Are you moved in the direction of tears by the following stories and if so why?—"Contact!" by Frances Noyes Hart; "Never in This World," by Stephen Morehouse Avery; "Let's Go to Hinky-Dink's," by Louis Bromfield.

In which of the stories mentioned above do (a) pictures, (b) sounds increase the emotional effect?

For a balance of pathos and satire, read Chekhov's "The Death of an Official." By which element are you more moved?

Chekhov wrote to Madame Avilov: "When you depict sad or unlucky people, and want to touch the reader's heart, try to be colder—it gives as it were a background, against which it stands out in greater relief. . . Yes, you must be cold." Has Chekhov followed his own advice in "Woe" and similar short stories?

In the following stories study the cause for smile or laugh. Is the humour in character, situation, or both? In which stories is burlesque used? farce? Notice whether

the subject for laughter is one of human folly, stupidity, arrogance, absurdity, ignorance, conceit, or vanity. In which stories do you find clumsiness, awkwardness or restraint used as the motivation for laughter. In all the stories is there an element of novelty without which the humorous would be absent? In how many is there an element of inferiority compared with which the conscious superiority of the reader forms one of the reasons for laughter? Do you notice examples of the incongruous? In how many do you find the significant in conjunction with the insignificant? the noble with the ignoble? the important with the trivial? Is the reader made to sympathise with the inferior object? Does dialect contribute to humour?

P. G. Wodehouse's "The Custody of the Pumpkin," Stephen Vincent Benét's "The King of the Cats," Cambray Brown's "Episode in a Machine Age," Mariel Brady's "Peter Projects," William Hazlett Upson's "I'm in a Hurry," and "The Old Home Town," Nunnally Johnson's "Good Old Uncle Homer," Julian Street's "In Need of Change," and "Mr. Bisbee's Princess," Howard Brubaker's "The Milk Pitcher," Stephen Leacock's "The Man with the Adventure Story," Booth Tarkington's "At Home to His Friends," "The Big Fat Lummox," and "Cornelia's Mountain," Ring W. Lardner's "Liberty Hall," "Anniversary," "Ex Parte," and "Dinner," Richard Connell's "A Friend of Napoleon," and "The Man Who Could Imitate a Bee," L. H. Robbins's "Mr. Downey Sits Down."

CHAPTER XIII

LOCAL COLOUR AND ATMOSPHERE

1. *Local Colour.* Definition; range; authors; error of over-emphasis; best manifestation of local colour; examples; identity of the masters with definite locale; the search for local colour and the value of imagination; emphasis on first-hand knowledge; exceptions.
2. *Atmosphere.* Confusion with local colour; comparison with physical atmosphere; range; discussion of relation with local colour; illustrations, divergence; illustrations, harmony; range of atmospheric effects for "atmosphere story"; best type for experimentation; a note on subjectivity, its bearing on atmosphere; subordination of other elements to atmosphere in "The Fall of the House of Usher"; supreme importance of diction.

1. *Local Colour*

From everyday exposure the term "local colour" has paled to dim metaphor that is self-explanatory. In order, however, to consider briefly its technical significance, we may do well to keep in mind that it is the detailed representation of characteristic features, such as manners, dress, dialect, scenery, and the like, of a particular time and place. The object of its use in fiction is to secure an impression of verisimilitude or reality. Local colour in the story may range from slightest hint of year, month or day and an implied setting, to an accumulation of detail which dominates other elements. It may be found as an "elusive tincture of affairs" or as the most pronounced feature.

Authors of the distinctive local colour story can be classified easily by their districts; "like wheat or apples," as Henry S. Canby suggests. Bret Harte was the first of the conte writers to bring into service time and setting as an integral and integrative detail of his narrative. George W. Cable, for Creole New Orleans, Miss Murfree for the Tennessee Mountains, Thomas Nelson Page for Virginia, Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins Freeman for New England, Hamlin Garland for the Middle West—these, after Bret Harte, are the chief leaders of the school. "And a general exploitation of dialects, customs, scenery, the rags, tatters, waifs, strays, and left-behinds of civilisation generally, accompanied these finer examples." Too many followers who emphasised setting at the expense of action made the mistake of assuming that a clever handling of local colour connotes excellence in narrative. Descriptions of people and places do not make a story; scenes elaborated carefully with respect to dialect, dress and other insignia of local colour may contribute only to spectacle. A stage may be well set and peopled but without dramatic action there is no play. Peculiar customs, superstitions, ways of dressing and ways of speaking are undoubtedly accessory to the truth and interest of the narrative, because of the close relationship between character and environment. But the author must take care that through their embellishing office he does not hide his essential struggle or complication. O. Henry, lauded for his skill in handling local colour, saw that it did not predominate. "Just change Twenty-third Street in one of my New York stories to Main Street; rub out the Flatiron Building, and put in the town hall, and the

story will fit just as truly in any up-state town. At least I hope this can be said."

In its best manifestation, local colour should be so unobtrusive, so skilfully handled that the reader will fail to notice it as an entity or to feel it as a distinct presence. But on reflection he should observe that nowhere else than in the given place and time would the action seem quite so fitting and natural. The action of the so-called local colour story would occur, probably, nowhere other than in the recorded setting. "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" would lose its value if time and place were changed. Take away the New England elements from any one of Mary Wilkins Freeman's earlier stories, and you destroy the worth of the remainder. In general, contemporary writers know how to use perfectly the attributes of time and place; they emphasize the real sufficiently to give substance to the fabric of the tale. "Give This Little Girl a Hand," by Fannie Hurst, "Night Club," by Katharine Brush, and "With Glory and Honour," by Elisabeth Cobb Chapman belong essentially to the New York night life of today; moved elsewhere, the action of each would falter for lack of support.

Besides bearing in mind the cautions relative to overloading, the amateur also must know that the master who identifies himself with a given locale does not secure local colour by chance acquaintance. If an author represents a people faithfully and accurately in story after story to the degree that his name is well-nigh symbolic of a country at a certain period, he must live among the people. Kipling on a visit to India for the purpose of picking up story material never could have imbued with the essence of time and place his "Plain Tales," "Life's

Handicap," and "Under the Deodars." To Kipling the Indians were "Mine Own People":

> "I have eaten your bread and salt,
> I have drunk your water and wine;
> The deaths ye died I have watched beside
> And the lives that ye led were mine."

Maristan Chapman on a week's visit to the setting of "Happy Mountain" could not have caught the implications of dialect that make her tales a reflection of life itself.

One or two good stories possibly may be written by a writer who experiences a place temporarily or even ephemerally. His work will not be identified with that place except under the conditions mentioned. If he makes a pilgrimage for the purpose of studying people and places, let him be wary of experiences that mislead. Maristan Chapman's fictive author in "Treat You Clever" suffered a humorously disastrous night when first he sought Glen Hazard for local colour.

Writers there are who assert that imagination does for them what experience does for others. "Make a chart of your imagination; write only about what appeals to your imagination" is a piece of advice frequently given to the incipient writer. The suggestion, which is not without value, is here passed on for what it is worth. Katherine Fullerton Gerould affirms that she can "imagine" Africa; that although she has not seen Africa, she can create the illusion better than she can that of China, which she has seen. For most of us, she succeeds; and we may grant, therefore, that excellent stories result from imagination as a scene-maker, without

experience. In no such instance, however, will local colour be a reproduction of life in the sense that literature reflects life or the actual.

"It is one of the inexplicable mysteries of the trade of writing that no man, however well he handles the tools of that trade, can write convincingly of things about which he personally does not know. A man might aspire, let us say, to write a story with scenes laid in Northern Africa. In preparation for this task he might read a hundred volumes about Northern Africa; its soil, its climate, its natives, its characteristics. He might fairly saturate himself in literature pertaining to Northern Africa; then sit him down and write his story. Concede him to be a good craftsman; concede that the story was well done; that his descriptions were strong, his phrasing graphic, his technic correct,—nevertheless it would lack that quality they call plausibility. Somehow the reader would sense that this man had never seen Northern Africa with his own eyes or breathed its air with his own nostrils."[2]

The two exceptions noted by Irvin S. Cobb deal with historical events and future events, and with places which no man has seen—say the planet Mars. This judgment is in harmony with that of others, who admit the plausibility of historical stories—such as, let us say, Inez Irwin's "A Spring Flight" or James Branch Cabell's tales in "Gallantry"—and the apparent probability of impossible adventures, such as those in H. G. Wells's "The Country of the Blind."

2. *Atmosphere*

Atmosphere is here noticed in connection with local colour, first to aid the student in guarding against con-

[2] Irvin S. Cobb, "Local Color."

fusion of terms; second, to prevent his attempt to create atmosphere by emphasising local colour elements. Though of necessity having interdependent relations, the two are distinct entities.

In its literal sense atmosphere is a gaseous enveloping medium, ordinarily synonymous with the air surrounding the earth. Air is tenuous, intangible, yet it has a pressure of something like fifteen pounds to the square inch. It may manifest itself as light or heavy, cold or warm, bright or gloomy. Withdrawal of air results in vacuity. Atmosphere in fiction is likewise the feeling that permeates a given environment. It may be whimsical or dull, light or serious, cheerful or grave. Lack of atmosphere means an emptiness of which the uncritical reader is dimly aware, and of which the critic is fully conscious. Without it, a character has no element in which to move and breathe. Now just as local colour ranges from a few details of time and place to the setting predominant as a story feature, so atmosphere is at one extreme only a vague medium, at the other an all-persuasive force. To create a story of atmosphere, the author must harmonise setting and character with feeling. Feeling must predominate.

By way of illustrating the fact that atmosphere and local colour are diverse, let us suppose that the writer has in mind an atmosphere story in which the majesty of mountains and the presence of primeval forests constitute elements of local colour. Let the writer introduce into the stately setting a dialect speaking mountaineer, and observe how easily the atmosphere previously suggested by the local colour element may be changed. Unless the

dignity of the mountaineer be made to dominate his dialect, the chances are that the story will be one not of atmosphere, but one wherein local colour and characterisation are at odds with tone impression. That is to say, atmosphere is strengthened not by laying on local colour, but by selection for unity of tone and feeling between man and setting. A more definite illustration of the divergence between local colour and atmosphere may be adduced from a comparison of two stories, one by Thomas Hardy, the other by Arthur Quiller-Couch. Hardy's fictive "Wessex" embraces part of Devonshire: Quiller-Couch's delectable Duchy is Devon and Cornwall. Quiller-Couch's "A Corrected Contempt" has for its setting a train passing through Devon. At Newton Abbot is introduced an old man who speaks in broad dialect. Hardy's "The Grave by the Handpost" is, like the one just mentioned, a tragic story of father and son. Moreover, the general setting and the peculiar dialect of both are in themselves similar. But the two atmospheres or feelings are widely different. In the first narrative we are concerned mainly about the merely human relations between father and son; in the second we are dominated by the fatalistic feeling. "The Grave by the Handpost" resembles, rather, in its atmosphere, Hawthorne's "Roger Malvin's Burial," which is steeped in the same fatalism. Other reasons operate to individualise the stories of Hardy and Quiller-Couch, but they do not destroy the point of the illustration that atmospheres wholly different may be integrated with similar local peculiarities. Conversely, atmospheres remarkably similar may be found with different locales.

Of stories harmonising carefully the setting and the

mood, "At the End of the Passage" and "Ethan Frome" are worthy of study. The former has for local colour intense heat, a "tattered, rotten punkah of whitewashed calico," which was "puddling the hot air dolefully at each stroke," clouds of dust, parched trees, and huts of baked mud, all of which are consistent with the ghostly horror of the story. The bleakness of Ethan Frome's life is emphasised by the hardship and the cold, characteristic of his New England environment. Local colour and atmosphere unite to carry the plot of Walter Duranty's "The Parrot," the action of which could occur only in disturbed Soviet Russia; of available scenes, the author chose the ones which best suit the dominant satiric mood.

The range of atmosphere effects for a so-called story of atmosphere is narrow; the mysterious, the gloomy and the fatalistic having been most aptly chosen by successful authors. For the amateur the best type for experimentation is that wherein human-kind is subordinated to nature or setting. Thomas Hardy's "The Return of the Native" is a familiar example of such subjection throughout an entire novel. The first chapter is a fit preliminary to the thesis that Egdon Heath moulds the destinies of the men and women involved in the action.

It must be remembered that to achieve success, the author first conceives a feeling for the place which he, in turn, re-creates that it may produce its feeling for the reader. In the art of description two points of view are recognized, the objective and the subjective. The latter is synonymous with the mental attitude of the observer; the objective is merely the physical point of vantage. An older writer of fiction chose—and usually stated—an objective point of view, whence he gave a long, ac-

curate, and sometimes tedious catalogue of details composing the picture. He imbued the picture with little of his own personality, though he presented it so fully and with such verisimilitude that the reader might see it through his own eyes and colour it with his own subjectivity. The moderns are given to suffusing the picture with their own personal interpretation of the original. Said another way, skill in showing the appeal of nature to a temperament is modern. The more the object takes on the hue of the glasses through which the author sees—and every one has his own, provided he has not thrown them away for something hopelessly conventional—the more subjective is the resultant description. There is a direct connection between the author's mood, then, and atmosphere. By first seeing, then feeling, he may use to dominate all other story elements the "ominousness of locality."

"The Fall of the House of Usher," popularly regarded as the classic atmosphere story, begins to produce its effect by a description of the house and its environment. The following summary reveals that elements contributing to atmosphere are integrated with the setting.

A. Setting:
   1. Time—fall of the year.
   2. Place—a stretch of gloomy country, name unknown; the "melancholy house of Usher."

B. Characters:
   1. Mysterious, emaciating illness of Usher.
   2. Ghostly appearance of Lady Madeline.
   3. Similarity of tone in characters and in the house itself.

4. Gloominess of the characters emphasised by the presence of the man from the world outside.

C. Action:
   1. Mysterious behaviour of Lady Madeline.
   2. Mysterious behaviour of Usher.
   3. Death and burial of Lady Madeline.

D. Sentences:
   A peculiarly monotonous rhythm.

E. Diction:
   .1 Cumulative effect of adjectives intensifying gloom and mystery.
   2. Use of contrasting words to heighten the effect.
   3. The predominance of heavy sounds, as d and b.
   4. Almost absolute lack of colour words.

Nothing has been said throughout this volume regarding the importance of diction. The accurate and effective use of words has been presupposed. But just at this point let the student remember that his own feeling expressed through the apt word will transmit the impression to the reader. And "feeling" is to be interpreted here as "mood,"—not as "emotion." Take the first sentence in "The Fall of the House of Usher": "During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher." Observe, first, how the key is changed by a beginning which in meaning

and intent shows antithesis: "On the morning of a bright, clear day in the springtime of the year, when the sun rode high in the heavens, I had been journeying with friends through a singularly beautiful section of the country; and as noontime came on, we found ourselves within view of the hospitable House of Usher." The sentence rhythm is now out of harmony with the new impression; that is, the rhythm Poe secured was in keeping with the atmosphere of gloom; and, in spite of the changes, something of its prime character is retained.

Specifically, the words "dull," "dark," "soundless," "autumn," "clouds," "oppressively," "passing," "alone," "dreary," "tract," "shades," "evening," "melancholy" strike and maintain the prevalent tone. Later, Poe speaks of the "tarn." "Pool" or "pond" would have marred the effect.

By his feeling for a place, by his creation of characters and invention of incidents to fit the place, and by his choice of words to convey the feeling to the reader, an author provides himself with the requisites of an atmosphere story.

Exercises for Chapter XIII

Study with respect to local colour all the stories in previous exercises. What elements of local colour are used in each to greatest advantage? Notice in particular the work of Sarah Orne Jewett, Alice Brown and Mary Wilkins Freeman, for New England; of Charles Egbert Craddock (Miss Murfree) and, later, Maristan Chapman, for the Tennessee mountains; of John Fox and, later, Irvin S. Cobb, for Kentucky; of Fannie Hurst, for New York; of Octavus Roy Cohen, for the darktown folk of Birm-

ingham, Alabama; of Ring W. Lardner, for the middle class easterner.

Read Annie T. Slosson's "A Local Colourist," O. Henry's "A Little Local Colour," and Brander Matthews's "In Search of Local Colour."

"Silence," by Leonid Andreyev, brought the author immediate recognition. Read and study the story for the dominance of atmosphere, the subordination of characters and incident.

By what means does Frederick Wedmore achieve his atmospheric effect in "A Dream of Provence"?

What is the atmosphere in De Maupassant's "Moonlight"? How is it obtained?

How are atmosphere and local colour harmonized in Rose Wilder Lane's "Innocence"? In Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Pioneers"? In Bess Streeter Aldrich's "The Man Who Caught the Weather"? In Julia Peterkin's "Maum Lou"?

What is the atmosphere of May Sinclair's "Uncanny Stories"? the local colour?

What is the atmosphere of most stories in "The Black Cap"? What are the settings?

CHAPTER XIV

PROBLEMS OF COMPOSITION: BEGINNING, BODY, AND END

a. *The beginning.* Where to begin, with what, and how; beginning should strike the tone, indicate setting or introduce character; expository and narrative beginning versus the descriptive and dynamic.

b. *The End.* Progress of story determined by dénouement; graduation of steps to dénouement necessarily kept in view; ideal ending should be logical and should contain some unlooked-for element; the surprise ending; "Marjorie Daw"; the manner of creating the surprise; deceit practised by one character upon another; "The Furnished Room," similar deceit held in reserve until end; Leonard Merrick's "Tragedy of a Comic Song" dependent for surprise upon deceit implied, on cleverly using the point of view and on reader's expectancy of a more conventional ending; other examples; order of plot details may be so arranged as to effect surprise, a blanket method, in fact; surprise should deal fairly with reader.

3. *The body.* Chief problems are those of proportion, suspense, tempo; use and management of clues; clues with regard to coincidence; coincidence; integration of detail. Proportion easy for artistic mind; its relation to total effect of story; tempo; ways for accelerating the tempo; suspense; manner of its operation; may work from beginning to end; may operate in the climax scene; or after the dramatic climax; illustrations; 1. Poe's method of attaining suspense; 2. episodes, moral reflections; 3. adhering to point of view; conversely, shifting the point of view; illustrations; clues; coincidence; first requisite is seeming naturalness; coincidence in life versus coincidence in fiction; ways for making coincidence seem logical; base of story; rationalisation of coincidence in climax; in dénouement; clues important in rationalisation; serious use versus humorous use of coincidence; adjustment of all story features and problems for unity of effect.

HAVING studied plot, characterisation, the emotional element, and other larger phases of story making, we may turn to a few details of composition. These have to do with the problems of beginning, or of catching the reader's interest; the problems of the body, or of holding his interest; and the problems of the end, or of satisfying his interest.

Over the first of these the inexperienced writer is wont to affirm his trouble by an exclamation of discouragement: "If I only knew how to begin!" Nine out of ten thus wailing have not thought out their plans; they lament the failure of inspiration. The tenth student may have both material and plan, yet be at a loss for an effective attack.

"Where shall I begin?" is perhaps the first question to be considered, and the answer is this: "Begin as near to the climax of action as you possibly can, without loss of desired force, mass or weight, and without overcrowding." The qualifying clause is not to be forgotten. The initial impulse or incident may lie so near in place and time to the climax of action that a chronological order of events is not too long for the time unity. It may lie so far back that if the actual story is not to seem diffuse through a long chronology of events it had best be tucked in unobtrusively after the start is made. Ring W. Lardner's "The Golden Honeymoon" illustrates the first kind of story: the fiftieth wedding anniversary is the impulse for the events recorded by way of celebration, and the story progresses from A to Z. Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers" illustrates the second kind: the double crossing by Ole Anderson lies some time in the past, and it is tucked in after the opening of the story in the lunch room.

The story order is, therefore, from some point about N to the end of the action Z. The impulse of double crossing is A, which is inserted after N, about the point U or V; further, incidentally, Z is not reached; it is left to the reader. Again, properly for its due effect a story may present the first of the plot incidents at the beginning, afterwards condensing the unimportant and emphasizing only the important or "striking the high places" throughout before the climax of action. "The Brushwood Boy" is an older example of such management; "Splendid with Swords" is a later one. Obviously, the type of story has much to do with the "where to begin." Had Ring W. Lardner, for example, wished to elaborate the story of the quarrel wherein the four old people figure, he might have begun at the moment the two couples met. His intention was quite otherwise, however, as anybody who has read the story knows; the quarrel serves as climax only, in a series no reader would care to forego.

"What shall I begin with?" finds answer in the practice of Edgar Allan Poe, as summed up by Clayton Hamilton; "Poe began a story of setting with description; a story of character with a remark made by or about the leading actor; and a story of action with a sentence pregnant with potential incident." The contemporary short story writer may conform to these ways but he is usually briefer than Poe and Hawthorne. Present day readers expecting and desiring action anticipate that they will be satisfied by a story which has a dynamic beginning. "The door of Henry's lunch room opened, and two men came in." This sentence falling immediately under the title of "The Killers" informs the reader at once that he has entered into the drama of Hemingway's story. Long

descriptions, except for atmosphere stories or stories emphasizing character, may intrude too far upon the domain of the narrative, or may present to the reader a jungle of words through which he hesitates to strike his way before coming into his kingdom of the story itself. Perhaps most readers of Conrad's "The Brute" and "The Secret Sharer" prefer the latter for readability, if not perhaps for power, too; yet "The Brute" will draw its readers more surely than will the other tale, which begins with four hundred words of description. Beautifully presented as the description is with respect to maintenance of physical and mental points of view, clarity of picture, and conveyance of mood, it lacks the direct attack of "The Brute": "Dodging in from the rain-swept street, I exchanged a smile and a glance with Miss Blank of the Three Crows," and so forth.

For succinctness and directness, Conrad Aiken's openings challenge the reader: "Five o'clock. He looked at his watch, hoping that it was later—late enough for dinner."—"By My Troth, Nerissa!" "I am a bachelor; aged thirty (within a month); not very clever, and rather shy."—"An Escape from Fatuity." "Marie Schley sat in the Watertown car by the open grilled window."—"The Last Visit." These three examples, taken from the collection, "Bring! Bring!" introduced character, and hint at immediate action, a hint the reader is not disappointed in heeding. Who could forego the reading of Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Quicksilver" after the first sentence makes its impact?—"Agatha Grey had taken a hurt so hideous that if she were to live to a hundred she would never get over it; yet because she was upright and innocent she had not let it leave a scar that anyone could

see." Here, again, character in relation to action sets the story on its way.

To the third question, "How shall I begin?" the answer is "In the right key." On the careful adjustment of tone effects, the convincing power of the narrative may ultimately rest. The humorous story has its tone; the serious story, one quite different; romance is conveyed by a definite manner of striking out; realism by another manner. In each story just mentioned, or from which the first sentence is quoted, the attack is in the right key. In Conrad's "The Brute," however, the beginning is of the enveloping action, itself in contrast to the tragic tale incorporated.

If the short-story beginning can strike the tone, indicate the setting, and suggest character or hint at the nature of the action, it is obviously more economical than if it does only one of these things. The beginning may be expository, descriptive, or dynamic; in general, of these three the dynamic is preferable. In order to secure a reader, the writer must use the introduction as a hook; it is a first and necessary tool.

2. *The End.*

Since the progress of the story from the beginning is determined almost entirely by the end, let us turn to the problems of the end. The dénouement is the great accomplishment to which the writer must direct all his skill; with it in view, he will graduate his steps so as to rise steadily to a climax of action. "Something is described that must bring about some conclusion. A problem is presented which must be solved. In the beginning

are all the elements of the situation. The question immediately arises as to how the conclusion worked itself out of the situation and indeed what the conclusion really was. As the writer proceeds from his problem to his conclusion he tells everything except the vital point. Just the thing that happened he is very careful to conceal. The reader may know in a general way what it must be. If he is at all clever, he should be able to guess this, for all the facts in the case must be before him, and if he puts them together properly he will know. But the actual material event which happens must be strictly held in reserve."[1]

The reader of short stories expects, nowadays, the surprise ending. Rather is he surprised if he fails to find it. He feels as insipid, and judges as commonplace, the ending, which however strong and logical, contains not some unlooked-for element. The ideal dénouement is striking yet natural; the unexpected, unnatural ending is as absurd as the simple, natural solution is too "easy." Yet, notwithstanding that the surprise dénouement found its greatest development in the twentieth century, it was practised hundreds of years ago "Babylon" has been quoted (see p. 126), and the ballad of "Fair Annie" may be cited here to illustrate the statement further. Printed by Scott, in the "Minstrelsy" and by the late Professor Child, this ballad rehearses a story told by Marie de France ("La Fraisne," or "The Ash Tree") "three hundred years older than any manuscript of the ballad." The beginning presents the situation, dramatically:

[1] "How to write Fiction," p. 92.

"It's narrow, narrow, make your bed,
And learn to lie your lane;
For I'm ga'n o'er the sea, Fair Annie,
A braw bride to bring hame.
Wi her I will get gowd and gear;
Wi you I neer got nane.

But wha will bake my bridal bread,
Or brew my bridal ale?
And wha will welcome my brisk bride,
That I bring o'er the dale?"

"It's I will bake your bridal bread,
And brew your bridal ale;
And I will welcome your brisk bride,
That you bring o'er the dale."

"But she that welcomes my brisk bride
Maun gang like maiden fair;
She maun lace on her robe sae jimp,
And braid her yellow hair."

The ballad progresses by showing the return of Lord Thomas, and Annie's greeting.

And aye she served the long tables,
With white bread and with wine;
And aye she drank the wan water,
To hold her color fine.

And aye she served the lang tables,
With white bread and with brown;
And aye she turned her round about,
Sae fast the tears fell down.

The bride and groom lie down to sleep; Annie near them weeps; the bride questions her:

"What ails ye, what ails ye, Fair Annie,
That ye make sic a moan?
Has your wine barrels cast the girds,
Or is your white bread gone?

O wha was't was your father, Annie,
Or wha was't was your mother?
And had ye ony sister, Annie,
Or had ye ony brother?"

"The Earl of Wemyss was my father,
The Countess of Wemyss my mother;
And a' the folk about the house
To me were sister and brother."

"If the Earl of Wemyss was your father,
I wot sae was he mine;
And it shall not be for lack o gowd
That ye your love sall tyne.

For I have seven ships o mine ain,
A' loaded to the brim,
And I will gie them a' to thee,
Wi' four to thine eldest son:
But thanks to a' the powers in heaven
That I gae maiden hame!"

Chaucer's tale of Patient Griselda has features in common with this ballad, although his ending makes use of surprise for Griselda only; the reader has been in the secret all along.

The surprise ending, revived, made classics of at least two stories long before 1900. Thomas Bailey Aldrich's

"Marjorie Daw" is fifty years of age; De Maupassant's "The Necklace" is somewhat younger. Among the authors following these two are O. Henry, Leonard Merrick, W. W. Jacobs, and hosts of later writers who have learned this trick of the trade.

Everybody knows the letters that Edward Delaney wrote to his friend John Flemming. And everybody knows that the young woman so delicately yet so powerfully described as to catch the fancy of Flemming did not, after all, exist. And nearly everybody remembers that it is the very last sentence which reveals the hoax Delaney has played, and the consequences of which he has fled to escape: "For, oh, dear Jack, there isn't any colonial mansion on the other side of the road, there isn't any piazza, there isn't any hammock—there isn't any Marjorie Daw!"

Not everybody recognizes, however, nor for some time did story writers themselves seem to recognize, that this dénouement is but an instance of a general method. Deceit practised by one character upon another need not be revealed until the end of the story. Such deceptiveness may be unpleasant or pleasant. Now, the reader of "Marjorie Daw" just escapes the bitterest disappointment; but fortunately, he may guess before the dénouement what Flemming did not foresee—and will, therefore, find compensation in his own superiority, or in Flemming's discomfiture. Even if he does not begin to suspect Delaney's ruse, still he finds consolation in the fact that Flemming was hoaxed: Misery loves company.

This means of creating surprise, O. Henry employed —with variations—in "The Furnished Room," "The Caballero's Way" (wherein disguise enters, by way of

carrying out the artifice), "Lost on Dress Parade," and elsewhere. The best example of the type, perhaps, is "The Furnished Room." The story opens with a young man who is searching among the tenements in a squalid section of New York. At the last house he takes lodgings.

"As the housekeeper moved away, he put for the thousandth time the question that he carried at the end of his tongue:

" 'A young girl—Miss Vashner—Miss Eloise Vashner—do you remember such a one among your lodgers? She would be singing on the stage, most likely. A fair girl of medium height and slender, with reddish, gold hair, and a dark mole near her left eyebrow.'

" 'No, I don't remember the name. . . .' "

the housekeeper deliberately replies.

The story continues with the young man's despair, the visitation of the mignonette ghost, and the suicide. Then comes the revelation of the deceit:

"It was Mrs. McCool's night to go with the can for beer. So she fetched it and sat with Mrs. Purdy in one of those subterranean retreats where housekeepers foregather and the worm dieth seldom.

" 'I rented out my third floor back this evening,' said Mrs. Purdy across a fine circle of foam. 'A young man took it. He went up to bed two hours ago.'

" 'Now, did ye, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am?' said Mrs. McCool with intense admiration. 'You do be a wonder for rentin' rooms of that kind. And did ye tell him, then?' She concluded in a husky whisper laden with mystery.

" 'Rooms,' said Mrs. Purdy in her furriest tones, 'are

furnished for to rent. I did not tell him, Mrs. McCool.'

"'''Tis right ye are, ma'am; 'tis by renting rooms we keep alive. . . . There be many people will rejict the rentin' of a room if they be tould a suicide has been after dyin' in the bed of it.'

"'As you say, we has our living to be making,' remarked Mrs. Purdy.

"'Yis, ma'am, 'tis true. 'Tis just one wake this day I helped ye lay out the third floor, back. A pretty slip of a colleen she was to be killin' herself with the gas—a swate little face she had, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am.'

"'She'd a-been called handsome, as you say,' said Mrs. Purdy, assenting but critical, 'but for that mole she had a-growin' by her left eye-brow. . . .'"

The shock of this ending is dependent on Mrs. Purdy's lie. The reader is not hoaxed or cheated, however; for the tragedy she concealed, outweighing the secondary consideration of the falsehood, staggers one by its importance and impresses by its fitness. Moreover, the narrator dares use adequate clues. The personality of the woman is such that one may suspect her of lying, even before the act; the suggestion in the fragrance of mignonette confirms the suspicion that Eloise Vashner has occupied the third floor back. It is also true that by keeping the spot-light on the young man—until the final shift—the author makes easier the working of the deceit.

The influence of "Marjorie Daw" is traceable also in the stories of Leonard Merrick. This English writer's own testimony indicates as much:

"I never hear the absorbing art of the conte mentioned without my thoughts darting to a short-story that I read

more than twenty years ago and have never seen since. Sometimes I wonder whether I have been unconsciously influenced by it in determining the form of several of my own experiments in this field of fiction. It happens occasionally that I am paid the high compliment of being told that as a short-story writer I 'owe much to an attentive study of the methods of Maupassant and Anatole France.' And then I have not the least hesitation in saying that I owe nothing at all to it. But I would not declare with such certainty that I owe nothing to the swirl of enthusiasm that I felt as a boy on the afternoon that I read Thomas Bailey Aldrich's 'Marjorie Daw.' . . ."[2]

Mr. Merrick's surprises, as mere exercises of the technical gymnast, are marvels of cleverness. Study, for example, "The Tragedy of a Comic Song."

"I like to monopolise a table in a restaurant, unless a friend is with me. So I resented the young man's presence. Besides he had a melancholy face. If it hadn't been for the piano-organ, I don't suppose I should have spoken to him. As the organ that was afflicting Lisle Street began to volley a comic song of a day that was dead, he started.

" 'That tune!' he murmured in French. If I did not deceive myself tears sprang to his eyes.

"I was curious. Certainly, on both sides of the Channel, we had long ago had more than enough of the tune. That the young Frenchman should wince at the tune I understood. But that he should weep!

. . . "I smiled sympathetically. 'We suffered from it over here as well,' I remarked.

" 'I did not know,' he said in English that reproved my

[2] New York *Times.*

French, "it was sung in London, also—"Partant pour le Moulin"?'

. . . " 'Monsieur, it is my 'istory, that comic tune!' "

The narrative told by the gentleman centred about three young people; the poet Tricotrin, the composer Pitou, and the singer Paulette Fleury. Poet and composer, each in love with the girl, made for her the song, "Partant pour le Moulin." The raconteur concluded:

" 'Listen! when they have gone to call on her one afternoon, she was not at 'ome. What had happened? I shall tell you! There was a noodle, a rich—what you call a "Johnnie in the Stalls"—who became infatuated with her at the Ambassadeurs. . . . Well, she was not at 'ome because she had married him. . . .

" 'What a moment! Figure yourself what they had suffered—both! They had worshipped her; they had made sacrifices for her; they had created for her her grand success; and as a consequence of that song, she was the wife of the "Johnnie in the Stalls"!' "

"As he finished, he heard again the strains of the tune floating up from the street.

" 'I cannot bear it,' he murmured. 'The associations are too pathetic.'

" 'They must be harrowing,' I said. 'Before you go, there is one thing I should like to ask you, if I may. Have I had the honour of meeting Monsieur Tricotrin, or Monsieur Pitou?'

" 'He stroked his hat and gazed at me in sad surprise. 'Oh, but neither, Monsieur,' he groaned. 'The associations are much more 'arrowing than that—I was the "Johnnie in the Stalls"!' "

It is clear that the surprise in this last line results from a new turn. The man who told the story did deceive, it is true; but he did so by implication, trusting to a false inference on the part of his auditor. The reader does not enjoy the story less because on restrospect he indulges the suspicion that the stranger was consciously tricking his friend of the restaurant. But more important with respect to the surprise of the reader are these truths: First, the author has skilfully employed the point of view—in the technically narrative sense; second, he has calculated on the reader's expectancy of a more conventional conclusion. As the story progresses, the reader is sure, as the auditor was sure, that the tearful gentleman is one of the rejected suitors. All the details seem to bear him out in this assurance. But the ending offers an entirely different reason for the tears.

This means of effecting surprise was thoroughly understood by O. Henry, as one may deduce from a study of "The Hiding of Black Bill." The tactics in both stories are identical. O. Henry elsewhere takes advantage of the principle that a reader helps to invent the story, grants the privilege, and by his own ending shows that he, the author, has not relied on the conventional situation and hackneyed conclusion the reader has constructed. "Girl" is an excellent illustration.

The first scene is in the law office of Robbins and Hartley. A man with an air of mystery about him enters and speaks to Hartley: "I've found out where she lives." Then he presents the name, Vivienne Arlington, and the address. Hartley shortly afterward leaves the office and makes his way to the Vallombrosa apartment house. He finds Vivienne in. Observe the description of Vivienne:

"[She] was about twenty-one. She was of the purest Saxon type. Her hair was a ruddy golden, each filament of the neatly gathered mass shining with its own lustre and delicate graduation of colour. In perfect harmony were her ivory clear complexion and deep sea blue eyes."

Hartley reproaches her for not having answered his letter. By this time the reader is somewhat puzzled, wondering whether Hartley's design is laudable. When he recalls meeting her at the Montgomery's, he gives the reader a clue, "I shall never forget that supper!" There is a hint of complication in the question he puts to her: "Is there anybody else?" There is. Mr. Radfford Townsend is coming for his answer. Hartley goes out, meets Townsend in the hall, and declares by the law of the jungle that the kill is his.

After he goes back "to his wooing," there is a hint of further complication.

"Do you think I would enter your house while Heloise is there?"

"She shall go," he declares; "I will send her away tonight."

Then follows the dramatic climax, "My answer is yes; come for me when you will!"

The swift drop to the dénouement shows Hartley one hour and forty minutes later at his suburban home. He is met by a woman who runs gladly to meet him. Hartley whispers to her. "Oh, Mamma!" she cries ecstatically, "Vivienne is coming to cook for us. . . . Go down, Billy, and discharge Heloise. She has been drunk again the whole day long."

Now, there is no reason why two servants should not

have the names of Vivienne and Heloise. But conventions in literature, which follow conventions in life, do not usually regard these as instances of typical nomenclature. Bridget and Becky are the conventional representatives. But O. Henry caught his opportunity for securing material out of the incongruous. It is incongruous that a beautiful cook should live in the Vallombrosa. So far as fairness to the reader is concerned, the surprise is better than that of "Marjorie Daw"; so far as possibilities are concerned, the result is better than "Goliath." For Aldrich's story by this title counts for its effect on the reader's assumption that a dog by the name of Goliath must of necessity be a giant. O. Henry repeated this surprise trick in "October and June." It may be presented in diagram:

a z is the course of the story as the author devised it. But the reader falling upon a false clue at c, let us say, a clue derived for the most part from his reliance on the hackneyed, constructs the story in his own manner, and foresees an ending at z'. He receives a shock on leaping from z' to z.

Besides open deceit, implied deceit, clever management of the angle of narration, and the reliance on a reader's sense of convention to finish the story differently from the author's plan, the order of plot details may be regarded as a blanket method, covering under its folds the cases mentioned above. A surprise may be effected by lifting an event or fact out of its natural order, and

placing it at the end of the story. There, if suspense has been adequately handled, its effect is in proportion to the time it has been withheld. Plot order and method of narration are both responsible for the shock. If A B C, and so on, down to Z, represent the regular sequence of events, then an important point—represented by any letter—may be deferred and placed after Z. Thus:

A.....Z (N).

This is the method which is outstanding in "The Necklace," in O. Henry's "Double Dyed Deceiver," and in Jacobs's "The Third String." A. E. Coppard's "The Funnel" may be summed up as a more recent example. Henry Lapwing marries Bridget, who presently bids him leave her and seek his lot elsewhere. Worried over her fidelity, he returns to say that he will share his salary with her. She tells him she will have none of it, that she will let lodgings and so keep the grace of God. None the less, Henry sends her the money which Bridget, tired of refusing, banks. Henry invents a funnel but lacks funds to secure patent rights. Bridget advances him a check. Henry sends her his royalties, amounting to several hundred pounds. At length, he loses his position; his funnel is replaced by a cheap imitation; he is ruined. At this point, he hears of Bridget's illness and arrives at her house to find her dead. In winding up his former wife's affairs, Henry takes her bank books, showing just the amounts he has sent her, to her solicitor, who informs him that Bridget has made a will leaving her property to a purser in the mercantile marine. Henry surrenders the books and takes a ticket "to the deuce

knows where. And that," concludes the tale, "was hasty of him, too hasty, for if he had stayed but a few days longer he would have learned that the purser had been drowned in the sea some little time before."[3] Withholding the fact of Bridget's interest in the purser results in a totally unexpected dénouement, joined, as it is, to the point of view which keeps to the front the figure of Henry. The second surprise, offered from the point of view of the omniscient author, doubles the shock, the intensity of the reader's feeling, "Alas! poor, poor Henry!"

These, then, are the chief methods of creating surprise.[4] They are found usually in combination, but may operate singly; they may be employed endlessly, but not always with ease and effect. Obviously some character in the story may be surprised, and with him the reader; or the reader may be the only one not in the secret; again, the reader may find out what some character never learns. But whatever the nature of the surprise, pleasant or unpleasant, to character alone or reader alone, or both, it should enhance the comedy of a humorous story and the tragedy of the one that is gruesome. Though unexpected, it should be natural. It should stand the test always, by a second reading of the story which will corroborate fair dealing on the part of the author.

[3] See also Chapter VI, p. 110.

[4] It is true that a pun may be at the basis of surprise; for example, see O. Henry's "Ransom of Mack." It is true that a character's forgetfulness may be used to end a farcical story in a humorous way; for example, "The Romance of a Busy Broker." But these methods are trivial, and by their very nature have not been adapted to the more pretentious conte. Some of the narratives dependent on lapse of memory are mere farcical anecdotes; for example, "From the Cabby's Seat." Moreover, most of these instances come within the general method of securing surprise by withholding a fact and releasing it subsequently.

The Body

In the progress from beginning to end, the author must set forth facts and ideas which bring the reader nearer and nearer to the conclusion, yet he must also hold the reader back while the story moves on. He must omit no detail of importance; he must pause for none that is without value. He will find that his chief problems, then, are those of proportion, suspense, and tempo. Clues, coincidence, and integration of elements are also among details of workmanship which demand flawlessness.

The more artistic the author, the more readily will he solve the problem of proportion, or conform to what Kipling has termed the Holy Law of Proportion. If he is inclined to be mathematical, the harder he will find it.

"It is the very difference between the artistic mind and the mathematical," says Gilbert Chesterton,[5] "that the former sees things as they are in a picture, some nearer and larger, some smaller and farther away: while to the mathematical mind everything in a million, every fact in a cosmos must be of equal value. That is why mathematicians go mad, and poets scarcely ever do. A man may have as wide a view of life as he likes, the wider the better; a distant view, a bird's eye view, but still a view and not a map. The one thing he cannot attempt in his version of the universe is to draw things to scale."

In the nature of an artistic piece of work, certain passages must be elaborated; others must be repressed. Upon the author's skill in subduing and elevating detail, in preserving balance of parts, will depend not only architectural beauty, but also the gripping power of the story.

[5] "Essay on Watts."

And the longer the period of time the greater the need for careful planning of proportion. Katherine Fullerton Gerould in her story, "On the Staircase," drops a few words indicating her recognition of this important problem: "This story has almost the gait of history. I have to sum up decades in a phrase. It is really the span of one man's whole life that I am covering, you see. But have patience with me while I skim the intervening voids, and hover meticulously over the vivid patches of detail. . . . ." Conrad's success in "The Brute" is accomplished in no small measure by the excellence of proportion. Two pages are required for summing up many brutalities of the *Apse Family* in many years; a page tells in greater detail a further shuddering instance; eight pages relate dramatically and fully the climactic horror and attendant events; the final three or four pages present the dramatic reverse—the end of the Brute, the *Apse Family*.[6] If the time of the entire action is brief, as that of Katherine Brush's "Him and Her," the scale is smaller, and the problem becomes one rather of selection among the minute details which are available.

The student should not confuse the business of proportion with that of tempo or the gait of action. The latter may be retarded or accelerated, while the proportion may remain the same. Prominent among devices for speeding action are these: Rapid dialogue, without the insertion of stage directions or other explanatory matter; terse sentences rather than loose involved sentences of many "hinge" words and cumbrous phrasings; diction suggestive of rapid action. Many amateur stories condemned as dragging or tedious lose much of the ob-

[6] See also Chapter IV, p. 67.

jectionable quality and gain a corresponding value by a tightening of tempo in the ways suggested.

With the third problem, suspense, both tempo and proportion are bound up. A slow movement of plot action, for instance, will hold the reader longer from the point he is travelling toward as his objective, an objective the value of which depends in a measure upon proportion. If the beginning of the story is likened unto a hook, then the principle of suspense and its operation may be compared to the clamp or vise which holds the reader firmly. Let us study the manner of its operation. Primarily it works through curiosity, apprehension or anxiety. The reader must desire to know what happened, who did it, to whom happiness or disaster was brought, what consequences ensued, and must desire increasingly through the right application of suspense on the part of the author. 1. Suspense may operate from the beginning or near the beginning throughout the narrative. For example, the reader of Conrad's "The Secret Sharer" wonders almost from the first whether the captain will be able to keep the refugee concealed, in the face of the odds against him; not until the end does the strain relax. 2. It may operate in the climax scene, as in "The Persistent Little Fool," where the reader awaits the outcome of Bina's struggle to resuscitate drowned Roddy. "The Fourth Man" confines almost the entire action to a series of scenes that compose the one climax of the larger story, mostly untold. Suspense centers about the question of rescue. 3. Suspense may operate most strongly after the dramatic climax, or after the turning point in the struggle. After Bridget (of Coppard's "The Funnel") dies, the

reader wonders, "What will happen now?" Curiosity is stronger after her death than before.

The principle of suspense which operates through character or action or both may be attained in a number of ways. Every writer in every story has his individual task of creating it; but every one may find the general help in the following suggestions: 1. The method most often used by Poe consists of three stages. Poe (a) placed his character in a dangerous situation, then (b) offered scientific explanation of the danger or lingered otherwise upon it, and (c) set forth the exposition of means taken by the character to escape. "The Descent into the Maelstrom" and "The Pit and the Pendulum," for example, follow this order. 2. The author may introduce episodes, and philosophical or moral reflections; but must be careful in the short-story not to disintegrate his effect. In "The Brushwood Boy," the episode of Madame Zuleika and her interest in Georgie is well inserted. A similar caution applies to 3. The author may place emphasis on a character or a thread of interest which at the moment the reader is not worried about, leaving for a time the source of suspense. He may do this, for example, by shifting the point of view. By telling the story of A and B from A's angle and involving A in some action which arouses curiosity, the author may suspend the reader at any given point while he switches to B's story. Or he may do so, conversely, by adhering to the angle of narration. By telling only what A knows and sees, the author holds the reader suspended over B's case. When A finally learns the outcome as regards B, the reader will learn it, and only then.

In the chapter on the emotional element this book sug-

gested to the student the importance of certain properties and situations in appealing to the emotions of pity and fear, and to the sense of the ludicrous. It is hoped after this discussion of suspense the student will follow more readily the advice of Trollope: "Make 'em laugh; make 'em weep; make 'em wait."

With regard to the management of clues something has been said under Dialogue. The clue need not, of course, be included in the speeches of the characters, though that is the more dramatic manner. In "Mary Postgate," Kipling says, as the omniscient author: "It seemed to her that she could almost hear the beat of his propellers overhead, but there was nothing to see. . . ." At the moment, the reader thinks the fancy on Mary's part to be only a fancy. But a few paragraphs later, the "seeming" proves to have been a clevely inserted clue to immediate events. Such links with the future should be not too obscure nor too patent. One of the best examples of proper management is to be found in "The Three Strangers."

"But what is the man's calling . . . that he should come in and join us like this?"

"I don't know. I'll ask him again."

. . . . When he had tossed off his portion [of mead], the shepherd renewed his inquiry about the stranger's occupation.

The latter [the second stranger] did not immediately reply, and the man in the chimney corner, with sudden demonstrativeness, said, "Anybody may know my trade —I'm a wheelwright."

Presently, the shepherd observes, "You may gener-

ally tell what a man is by his claws," whereupon the "hands of the man in the chimney corner instinctively sought the shade." By this clue the reader is convinced that the stranger in the chimney corner is guilty, or at least desirous of remaining unknown. Later, the reader is thunderstruck to see a third stranger appear upon the door-sill and after a glance at the company run as if he were the guilty man. Hence, the clue is not too strong, after all, for the effect upon the reader is exactly what it should be. Capitally introduced, because apparently concealed, is a clue embedded in the first page of Russell's "The Fourth Man." In describing the raft, the author speaks of the sail, the helm, and then comments on a single point of real seaworthiness: "Its twin floats, paired as a catamaran, were woven of reed bundles and bamboo sticks upon triple rows of bladders." The description continues. Yet this clue is unconsciously noticed, emphasized as it is by that "single point of real seaworthiness," as the final ten lines of the story will prove even to the most cursory reader.

The connection between dramatic forecast in general or of clues in particular, and the whole subject of coincidence is one calling for consideration by the amateur. In most talks to young authors, suggestions about the employment of coincidence are rare. The student is told to use coincidence sparingly, and left to find the secret of success.

A thorough treatise would necessarily take account of the philosophical groundwork of coincidence. What to the incomplete vision of mankind may seem chance may be part of a prearranged purpose on the part of omniscience and all-wisdom. To the fatalist, there is no such

thing as accident; it is part of the plan. To one not of necessity fatalistic the accident is natural, however strange it may be or unusual. To the reader of the short-story, there must be no chance occurrence; it must be part of the plan; otherwise, it will not seem natural. "The number of people who die by accident every day is considerable," says de Maupassant. "But we cannot make a tile fall on the head of a principal character or throw him under the wheels of a carriage in the middle of a story, under pretext that it is necessary to introduce an accident." The accident must *seem* natural; the coincidence must *seem* natural.

Coincidence in its simplest denotation means occurrence at the same time; but in fiction it usually connotes a concurrence of events startling in nature or effect. For example, the following story has the characteristics of so-called "coincidence." It was contributed, in substance, to *The American Magazine*. A woman traveller was visiting California. At the close of her visit her hostess gave her a novel to read on the train. On her way to the station she stopped to have her watch repaired and when the jeweller handed her his card, she placed it in the novel. She did not read the book, however, but laid it away, until two years later, when she sailed for Europe. Neither on the journey over nor during her stay did she read the novel, but on her return journey she took it out. As she settled herself to read, she observed sitting near her a melancholy foreign youth, to whom she made some kindly remark. On his bursting into tears, she inquired the cause, and found that he had lost all his family in an epidemic. He was journeying to America to his only brother, whom he had not heard from for years.

"But he told me the name of the town he expected to move to," he said. "It is called Out West!" As gently as she might, the traveller explained to him the difficulty of his undertaking. The boy was in despair. As she tried to comfort him, she dropped her book; he stooped to pick it up, and the watchmaker's card fell out. The watchmaker was the long-lost brother.

Such a coincidence is in accord with the strange happenings of real life. To be natural and logical in the story, it must be prepared for, must seem part of a story plan, as in actuality it is a part of the whole universal scheme. How, now, can it be made to seem logical? Hardly sufficient is the advice given by a successful story writer and novelist, "Believe it yourself," though the advice is good—so far.

In the first place, coincidence may be used as the foundation of a story. If, for example, the coincidence just summarized from *The American* were the starting point, we should accept easily enough "the facts." That is, the story would not exist but for the coincidence with which it begins. "The Sire de Maletroit's Door" rests on the coincidence that Denis happened to be pursued by soldiers and took refuge in the doorway, so falling into a trap prepared for some one else. Charles Caldwell Dobie's "The Hands of the Enemy" grows out of the coincidence that Walton Pringle comes upon a cabin in which Sam Allen has been involved in the death of Marchel Duplin a few moments earlier. In each story the dramatic series of events grows logically out of a unique circumstance or coincidence accepted without question.

In the second place, coincidence may occur in the rising action or dramatic climax of a story or in the dé-

nouement, if made to seem logical and true to life. In my father's story, "Buford," the climax scene details a fight between the bull and the stallion. Preceding the climax, the teacher has been treed by the horse. Buford's advent is by way of coincidence; yet it is logical. Buford hung about the school grounds when not driven away, and this was the road to the school. Further, the teacher noticed a little earlier that the gate to the field where Buford grazed was open. This preparation is adequate. "The Outcasts of Poker Flat" depends upon coincidence for the dramatic climax: the outcasts are on the trail on the night of a snowstorm, the locale provides logic enough: the snow-fall is natural. "Never in This World," by Stephen Morehouse Avery, times the action of the tale to the great moment when Susan meets the King; what might appear coincidence is in reality not coincidence, save to one who would cavil at this most pathetic of fairy tales. In "The Pin-Prick," May Sinclair uses coincidence with a question-mark, thus suggesting a "problem" story. Here is the situation: Daisy Valentine and Frances Archdale were interruped in an intimate conversation by May Blissett. After they had let May see they wished to be alone, she left. A few hours later, the occupants of the studio apartment found May Blissett dead. "She was lying on the couch . . . dressed in her night-gown, with a sheet drawn up to her chin. The whole place was dim with the fog of the sulphur still burning." May left a farewell letter to Frances; in which occurred the passage: "Forgive me for stopping on like that. It was very thick-skinned of me when I

[7] See Short Stories for College Classes, Edited by Blanche Colton Williams, D. Appleton & Co., 1929.

saw you so happy there together. . . ." The result of May's act upon the mind of Frances is to convince her, Frances, that "if she had only sent Daisy Valentine away and kept May, May would have been living and happy now." The question in the narrator's mind and in the reader's, then, is this: Was May's reception, to her overcharged mind, not a "pin-prick" but the "last straw"? If the latter then, the case becomes one of coincidence, which determines the tragedy, constituting as it does the dramatic climax or turning point.

In the dénouement, coincidence may be equally convincing. A good instance of a story which succeeds chiefly because of a singular concurrence in the final action is Irvin S. Cobb's "The Belled Buzzard." It will be recalled that Squire Gathers has killed a pedlar and left the body in a swamp, to which buzzards have been flocking. A belled buzzard, in particular, has frayed the nerves of the killer, who has tried vainly to shoot the grisly bird. The pedlar's body is discovered; the Squire is summoned to hold the coroner's inquest. While he is on the way to the house to which the body has been removed, he hears the bell overhead and believes the buzzard is in pursuit. The inquest begins; the Squire breaks under the jangling, which he hears again, and confesses. But the torturing sound has emerged, after all, not from the buzzard; a little negro has walked through the hall ringing an old cow-bell. The coincidence is made to seem logical through the use of clues. The author 1. has emphasized that the buzzard wore a *cow*-bell attached to its neck; 2. has related that the two men as they drove up to the scene of the inquest saw a negro child grubbing under a feed rack. The reader is scarcely aware that he notices this

second fact in skimming along, but when he sees the youngster appear in the doorway he recalls both pointers. Irvin S. Cobb uses coincidence, somewhat less effectively, in "The Exit of Anse Dugmore," and again, entertainingly in his prize story, "Snake Doctor."

Coincidence may be used with serious significance; in "The Ambitious Guest," for example, where the fatalistic sense is uppermost. It may be employed in a clever way, as in "The Monkey's Paw," where its occurrence is explained for the superstitious by the use of charm or spell; or where charm or spell is explained for the matter of fact mind through trivial coincidence. It may be used humorously, as in Stephen Vincent Benét's "The King of the Cats," the laughter from which removes objection to the coincidence of the climax. Farce or satiric comedy will carry coincidence where the serious tone would fail to do so.

Whether the style is serious or humorous, rationalized coincidence may be found at any point in the story. Clues are the strongest mechanical supports. Be sure of the need and the purpose for coincidence, the way of handling it, and use it with a free, long arm.

In the foregoing pages, some attempt has been made to meet the questions arising with regard to the beginning, the middle, and the end. The how, the where, and the with-what-to-begin must be met by every writer of every story. The specific answer will fall, however, under the general answers herein offered. The creating of an effective dénouement has been discussed with respect to inclusive methods. Proportion, tempo, suspense, clues, and management of coincidence, problems of the body of the story which must be solved for every individual narrative,

have been studied, of necessity, as a class. Finally, an object to keep in view is the harmonising of all the story elements. In general, character, plot, and atmosphere should be adjusted carefully to one another; and in no less degree illustrations and figures, words, and sentence rhythm should be so integrated as to produce a strong effect.

Exercises for Chapter XIV

Study the value of the integrating detail in "Ironstone," by Phyllis Bottome; for example, in the dénouement, "Mary's lips moved, and her eyes darkened till they looked as black as wet ironstone."

Frederick Stuart Greene's "The Bunker Mouse" is an ocean story. After the author wrote that the voice of a certain character was like the purr of a tiger, he erased it. "It's a jungle simile," he said. Was his rejection based on a sound concept of the need for harmonious detail?

What values do you find in Kipling's "Mark of the Beast," in the passage. . . . "though the Silver Man had no face, you could see horrible feelings passing through the slab that took its place, exactly as waves of heat play across red-hot iron—gunbarrels for instance"?

Find other examples of minor details so introduced and expressed as to strengthen the unity of effect.

Point out the clues and other forecast to the climax of Louis Bromfield's "Picture," of M. C. Blackman's Hot Copy."

What is the clue to the dénouement of Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Bubbles"? Might the clue have been used to more gruesome end? If so, could the husband and the doctor have known the clue?

What clues in Rémy's character point to the dénouement of Abbie Carter Goodloe's "Claustrophobia"? in

Bina's character to the dénouement of Fanny Kemble Johnson's "The Persistent Little Fool"?

Study A. E. Coppard's "Fifty Pounds" in the light of Dorothy Brewster's comment: "Suspense is also a matter of placing clues properly and with just the right accent, and leading the reader away from discovery until the moment breaks logically in the narrative with all its dramatic intensity."—A Book of Modern Short Stories, page 476.

How is suspense secured in the first pages of Conrad's "The Brute"? in the climax of Hemingway's "The Killers"? How, throughout, in Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game"? in his "King Karney"? in his "All in the Day's Work"? Where does suspense work most strongly in Rose Wilder Lane's "Innocence"? Where in Ring W. Lardner's "Haircut"? in Wilbur Daniel Steele's "Arab Stuff"? in his "Blue Murder"? in his "Bubbles"?

Study the management of coincidence in the following stories: O. Henry's "The Green Door," "No Story," "Makes the Whole World Kin," "The Church with an Overshot Wheel," "A Double Dyed Deceiver," "Christmas by Injunction," "A Chaparral Prince," "At Arms with Morpheus"; Henry James's "The Tone of Time"; Thomas Hardy's "A Mere Interlude," and "The Three Strangers"; Richard Harding Davis's "The Boy Scout"; Ada Jack Carver's "Singing Woman."

Study the management of surprise in Edith Wharton's "Xingu," Barry Pain's "The Marriage of Miranda," O. Henry's "Tobin's Palm," "After Twenty Years," and "Christmas by Injunction"; in Shane Leslie's "The Hospital Nurse."

Where does surprise operate chiefly in Henry Sydnor Harrison's "Miss Hinch"? in Conrad Aiken's "Smith and Jones"? in his "The Last Visit"?

In John Russell's "Jetsam" is there a clue to the fact that the supposed ambergris is only tallow? Is the end successful? Why?

Read Richard Hughes's "The Ghost" for a unique management of surprise. Analyze the causes for his success in the terminal shock.

Anatole France's "The Procurator of Judæa" closes on the line: "Jesus?" he murmured, "Jesus—of Nazareth? I cannot call him to mind." Why is this one of the most successful among modern story endings?

CHAPTER XV

A SHORT-STORY TYPE: THE GHOST STORY

Story of the supernatural good for investigation; reasons for universal interest in ghosts; ghosts in fiction seem natural and logical; a tentative classification; the ghost-story of plot gives greatest satisfaction; reasons for ghostly visitations; physiological appeal; first appeal to sight; methods for creating vivid presentation; the *tour de force* invisible ghost; exemplification of principles in "The Phantom 'Rickshaw"; ghost story and dual personality illustrated in "The Triumph of Night"; Henry James a master of the ghost story; illustrations; a study of "The Turn of the Screw"; the aftermath an aid to convincing power.

PRESENTING the main principles and problems of technique, this study would be incomplete without examination of a definite story type. The detective story has illustrated plot development and presentation, and for the avoidance of repetition may be debarred from further service. The love story might be chosen, but rarely enough in best short-story literature does love supply the prevailing interest. Love is found in the secondary line of action from "The Negative Gravity" to "Blue Murder" and later; in a single line of interest story, frequently in a losing struggle with duty or some other protagonist, from "Olalla" to "I'm a Fool." For present purposes the tale of the supernatural offers a better field for investigation.

Man doubtless will be interested in ghostology until the last of the race has given up the ghost. In the first place, phenomena beyond the probings of philosophy

allure man to the supernatural. He sees through a glass darkly. The riddle of the universe, itself, as Lafcadio Hearn puts it, is a ghostly mystery. From curiosity, which cannot be satisfied by mere science, springs an attempt to pierce the darkness and to solve the mystery. Intellect alone creates a supernatural world. In the second place, human affection, grieved at the passing of the beloved, strives to conquer sorrow by envisioning the dead as living anew in some hereafter. Out of that realm, the rustle of a wing or the touch of a hand suffices to comfort. It is but a truism that all heavens are ghostly, from the Elysium of the Greeks to the supernatural plane of Sir Oliver Lodge's "Raymond." As a corollary, all hells are ghostly. Desire evokes the heavenly spirit, fear dreads the one from hell.

Besides, there are persons who possess "nerves," persons whose acute sensibilities enable them to see what the average of men and women may not see. Does not one give to them, and to clairvoyants, a certain degree of credence—even though one may dispose of the vision as a mental projection? Does not one discuss the subjective manifestation as though it were in truth objective?

From the above brief suggestions, it is evident that universal, every-day interest in ghosts, alone, will warrant their appearance in fiction. It is not even necessary to fall back on the truth that fiction, governed by laws of its own, may justifiably create its own world with fit inhabitants. For a consideration of the ghost story enforces the recognition that most of the apparitions presented are such as may appear to any one at any time. They are so substantiated by laws of reason that even

the doubter may not scoff. Let us look, then, at a tentative classification.

1. The ghost which appears to the sick mind; for example, "The Phantom 'Rickshaw."
2. The ghost which appears to the clairvoyant; for example, E. Nesbit's "The Mystery of the Semi-Detached."
3. The ghost which is evoked by one who desires it; for example, Kipling's "They."
4. The "problematic" ghost, or the apparition which may be explained either as material or ghostly, or not at all satisfactorily; for example, Fitz James O'Brien's "What Was It? A Mystery."
5. The "bona fide" ghost, or the wraith which is offered in good faith as a visitant; for example, "The Turn of the Screw," by Henry James.
6. The "humorous" ghost; for example, Stockton's "The Transferred Ghost."
7. The "hoax" ghost, which is none. F. Britten Austin's "Trial by Ordeal" is a recent instance.

For the sake of economy, only one example is offered under each heading; the reader may supply other instances.

Formerly, the *presence* of a spirit, the phenomenon, sufficed to hold a reader, particularly if the "atmosphere" was emphasised. But nowadays it is the ghost story of plot, the story which *explains* the presence of the spirit, which gives greatest satisfaction. In general—though let it be understood that the best story will show definite complication and solution illustrating these motives—these are the reasons for the appearances:

1. *Punishment.* The dogs in Edith Wharton's "Kerfol" which had been killed one after the other by their cruel master returned in a ghostly pack and took his life. At the time of vengeance, they appeared only to the wife of the villain, a woman who died "harmlessly mad." But they are visible now to the stranger who visits Kerfol, and are accepted by the community.

2. *Warning.* The good spirit in "The Inn of the Two Witches," by Joseph Conrad; the bad ghost in "The Triumph of Night," by Edith Wharton.

3. *Human companionship, or comfort.* The evil ones in Henry James's "The Turn of the Screw"; the good, in Kipling's "They," and May Sinclair's "If the Dead Knew."

4. *Shadows of coming events.* Katherine Fullerton Gerould's "On the Staircase." Such spirits, in retrospect, appear to have been ghosts of *doom,* worse even than the punishing spirits.

Then, there is the *genius loci* ghost, the familiar spirit of a place or object. His origin is apparently ancient; he is as old as Aladdin's Lamp. In some modern instances, such a spirit seems unable to free himself of the influence which caused his doom. Algernon Blackwood's volume, "The Empty House," brings together a whole congregation of such ghosts.

Now, the physiological appeal of these ghostly personalities must be—for effect on the reader—not less strong than the psychological. Seeing is believing.

But so is touching: "Except I shall see . . . and put my finger into the print of the nails . . . I will not believe." The most convincing of ghost-story writers has prepared a case against the doubting Thomas:

"The little brushing kiss fell in the centre of my palm—as a gift on which the fingers were, once, expected to close as the all-faithful, half-reproachful signal of a waiting child not used to neglect even when grown-ups were busiest—a fragment of the mute code devised very long ago.

"Then I knew. . . ."

So it was that Kipling's child spirit made its presence felt through physical contact.

O. Henry's gentle ghost of "The Furnished Room" manifested itself through the fragrance of mignonette. It was as though in striving to cross the bounds between the living and the dead the spirit found that the easiest way . . . Only as a voice did Tom appear in "The Inn of the Two Witches," "Mr. Byrne, look out, sir!" A striking appeal to the sense of sight is that of Mary Wilkins Freeman's ghost in "The Shadows on the Wall." The shade of the shade, in this story, was easier of accomplishment by the spirit than the shade itself.

Since sight, however, is the first of the senses, most writers make to it a brave appeal. Of course, the presentation of a picture is the technical aim, and the force of this presentation is in direct proportion to the author's skill in description. This is hardly the time or the place to enter upon a technical study of description. But for best effect in realisation of the ghost, here are some of the points to keep in mind:

1. Make an accurate setting. A staircase, a roadway, a room, a tower, a window.
2. Create a definite outline and position. Miss Jessel on the staircase, "in an attitude of woe." Quint at

the window, cut off by the lower frame. ("The Turn of the Screw.")

3. Repeat the ghostly appearance. The second self or other personality of John Lavington comes twice ("The Triumph of Night"); the Upper Berth ghost of Marion Crawford comes repeatedly.
4. If the ghost appears but once, let the visitation be attended by results which compel belief. The sequence of events in "On the Staircase", and the aftermath of the ghost-ship's visit (Richard Middleton's "The Ghost-Ship") are examples.

Another innovation represents the spirit appearing and talking, in broad daylight, exactly as the flesh-and-blood prototype might have done. In such instances, emphasis is placed on the *naturalness* of the phenomenon.

A *tour de force* of objectification is that made by the "Mystery" of Fitz-James O'Brien. It had strength to wrestle with two men; it made on the bed where it was flung and bound a deep impression; it held in circular distention a rope around its "waist." Yet it was invisible. Moreover, in spite of the invisibility, it showed "form" in the cast which was made of it. Perhaps in spite of these contradictions, there is no reader who will not continue the story to completion.

If these theories and principles are worth anything, they will find exemplification in any short-story popularly termed "good." Since any reader will grant that a sick mind may be obsessed, let us examine for interest a story of this variety. "The Phantom 'Rickshaw" is admittedly one of the best examples, and was reprinted only the other day as one of the "fifteen finest" short stories.

The story, it will be recalled, runs as follows: Jack,

Pansay in Her Majesty's employ in India, while returning to that country after a furlough at home, meets on the boat one Mrs. Agnes Keith-Wessington. A love affair develops, with a not uncommon sequel. After some months of association in Simla, Pansay tires of the woman. Later, he falls in love with Kitty Mannering. A week after his engagement is announced, Mrs. Keith-Wessington dies. Later, when riding with Kitty on the road where he had last seen Agnes, he meets her 'rickshaw and coolies. To his unutterable horror he sees Kitty and her horse "pass through men and carriage as if they had been thin air." The visitation appears again, and Pansay puts himself in charge of Dr. Heatherlegh. "Eyes, Pansay, all Eyes, Brain, and Stomach. And the greatest of these three is Stomach." The remedy is compounded of pills, cold baths, and exercise. After the doctor believes Pansay is cured, the officer rides out again with Kitty. Meeting the 'rickshaw, as before, he breaks down. "I have an indistinct idea that I dragged Kitty by the wrist along the road up to where It stood, and implored her for pity's sake to speak to It. . . . As I talked, I suppose I must have told Kitty of my old relations with Mrs. Wessington, for I saw her listen intently with white face and blazing eyes." Kitty throws Pansay over; he dies, the victim of a vision, and with the recognition that he deserves the punishment meted out to him.

The story holds the reader, as all good stories hold, by the narrative itself. There are two lines of interest subtly intertwined. The primary line is that of the struggle between Pansay and the ghost: the former conquers. The secondary line is that of his love for Kitty and hers for him. The action and interaction of the characters

bring about the entanglement of the two lines, and the solution, or, in this story, the débacle. Suspense is aroused, first, as to how long Jack can prevent Kitty's knowing; second, as to what she will do; third, as to whether Jack will be cured; fourth, as to the outcome of the struggle.

Though the apparition was purely subjective, as is indicated by the fact that nobody else saw it (not even the horses perceived anything unusual; and animals are peculiarly sensitive to ghosts. In "The Return of Imray," the dog Tietjens knows), though this is true, still the author has taken the trouble to picture the 'rickshaw and its occupant so well that the memory of the picture persists for the reader as of something he has himself seen many times. Kipling creates the place, or setting:

"The scene and its surroundings were photographed on my memory. The rain-swept sky, the sodden, dingy pines, the muddy road, and the black, powder-riven cliffs formed a gloomy background. . . ."

The 'rickshaw stands out clearly against this background; the reader sees it vividly, and returns to it mentally on the reappearance of Agnes. Again, he invites attention by the *uniqueness* of his ghostly company: a black and yellow 'rickshaw, drawn by four coolies; in the seat, a woman reclining against the cushions, handkerchief in left hand. These salient details are etched on the reader's mind. They are as clear as the notches on the stick of Robinson Crusoe. Finally, Kipling has employed the principle of repetition. Every time the scene is the road; the outline of the 'rickshaw party is the same; the colors are always those of the 'rickshaw "in life"; on every

occasion the ghost of Agnes utters the same words. One cannot forget them if he would.

The use of the first person, the "I" narrator, is supposed to carry conviction; but this device has been employed too long to be regarded as more than a convention. Kipling might as well have told it all in the third person. Compare, for example, with this method that of Edith Wharton, in "The Triumph of Night." The difference between the first and the third persons is probably in favour of the American story. It is as though the author added her word to the word of George Faxon.

In the story of the supernatural some manifestation of dual personality frequently finds place. Poe's "William Wilson," Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," Wells's "The Story of the Late Mr. Elvesham" all offer fascinating study to those who care to pursue this topic. But "The Triumph of Night," by Edith Wharton, heads the list for interest and significance.

George Faxon arrives at a deserted railroad station on a blustering winter evening, expecting to be met by some one from the household of Mrs. Culme, who has engaged him as her private secretary. Just as he has given up hope, two sleighs arrive, from one of which a young man advances. He has come not from Mrs. Culme, but from the home of his uncle, John Lavington, *the* John Lavington, and he is awaiting the arrival of the next train, which brings two friends of Lavington. The young man Frank Rainer, suggests that Faxon spend the night at Overdale. While they wait, Faxon has time to observe the physical weakness of young Rainer. Rainer says his uncle has been a "regular brick" to him; that when on account of threatened tuberculosis Rainer

had been packed off, almost, to Mexico, the Uncle had got another doctor with another opinion, who said New York would do well enough. His speech ends in a spasm of coughing, and when he removes his glove to grope for a handkerchief, Faxon notices that his had is "long, colourless, wasted." The four men drive to Overdale, where John Lavington appears, a "small figure, correctly dressed, conventionally featured." Rainer leaves Faxon to himself, after bidding him descend to the dining-room. Faxon, by error, wanders into his host's study. There, the party is assembled to witness Rainer's "last will and testament," which has been drawn up on his coming of age. As Faxon is requested also to witness, he remains. Just as he is wondering whether the host has ever noticed the "dead" hand of his nephew, he becomes sensible of another presence, a man of about Mr. Lavington's age and figure, just behind his chair. At the moment Faxon first sees him he is gazing at young Rainer with a fixed intensity of regard. The likeness between the two men strikes Faxon the more because of the contrast in their expression. John Lavington observes his nephew with a look of half-amused affection; the man behind the chair faces the boy with pale hostility. So startled is Faxon he finds it difficult to move; but, recalled to the situation, he signs his name. On looking up, he perceives that the figure is gone.

At the dinner table, later, Faxon notices that there are places for only five, and wonders about the stranger. The conversation turns to rumours of the stock market; from a number of slight episodes it is evident that Lavington is nervous because of the reported situation. When the discussion centres about Frank's state of health, some

one advises him to go at once to Mexico. Lavington suggests, "Perhaps Grisben's right. It's an opportunity ——" At this speech, the figure again appears behind Lavington's chair. Lavington gazes affectionately at his nephew; his shadow fixes young Rainer with eyes of deadly menace. Faxon now recognises what has been vouchsafed him; for nobody else sees the figure. He dashes out of the room, on some pretext, and makes his escape. Shortly after, he is overtaken by Rainer, who says: "My uncle thought I'd done something to offend you." The night walk proves too much for Frank's strength. When they arrive at the house of the lodge-keeper, he faints.

Faxon "knelt down to undo the fur collar about Rainer's throat, and as he did so he felt a warm moisture on his hands. He held them up and they were red. . . . "

The rest of the story needed by way of dénouement portrays George Faxon in the realisation that he had been singled out to warn and save and had closed his eyes to the powers of pity. Obviously, Lavington's affection for Rainer was at odds with a desire for his death.

If the tests mentioned in connection with "The Phantom 'Rickshaw" be applied here, they will yield equally satisfactory results. Notice the effective position of the figure behind the chair. From the very nearness of the figure (the subliminal Lavington) to the real Lavington, the contrast in their countenances is the more marked. The repetition is also compelling.

The ghost, however, is a "sick-mind" ghost. The

weakened condition of Faxon made his nerves more sensitive to the apparition; only he saw it.

Henry James always found the ghost story the best form of fairy tale. He has his story of dual personality in "The Jolly Corner," the ancestral ghost in "The Third Person" (the gentleman had been hanged, and refused to be "laid" until the maidens to whom he appeared also committed the crime of smuggling), the "evoked" ghost in "Maud-Evelyn" (wherein, paradox of paradoxes, the ghost marries and subsequently dies), and best of all the "bona fide" ghost in "The Turn of the Screw." This story may be, for many persons, a story of clairvoyance; I believe Mr. James meant the ghosts actually to exist, though without being visible to every one. Since Kipling and Henry James are the masters of the modern ghost story, and since one of the Anglo-Indian author's tales has just been used to illustrate in detail his power, I shall exemplify the "bona fide" stories with one by the American-English writer. If there were space, Kipling's "They" should be analysed as an example of the "evoked" ghost.

"The Turn of the Screw" is an atmosphere story of pronounced merit; yet as the interest lies, rather, in the explanation of the demonic spirits, it is not without value as plot narrative. Let us consider it from the following points:

Preparing the reader for the visitations; actually presenting them, and with convicting power; the result of the visitations.

Henry James attacks the reader's credulity by opening his story in a matter-of-fact way. At a party where ghosts are being discussed, some one tells of a

child that was haunted; another person, Douglas, knew of two children who were so persecuted. The requests for the story lead to Douglas's promise that he will send for and read the manuscript written by the governess of the haunted children. By the time it arrives, the reader is ready—with the household and assembled guests—to hear what has been recorded as fact and is offered here as fact by one who knew the writer. This "I-got-it-from-him-who-got-it-from-her" is an old device for inducing belief. By the time the reader has ventured easily through two or three doors, he finds himself in a new world, one governed by laws of its own. As a result of such induction, the immediate present fades; the world of fancy takes its place.

Here, then, are the steps in the finely graduated scale whereby the author prepares for something out of the ordinary:

1. The gentleman, uncle of the children, in engaging the governess, stipulated that he did not wish to be troubled; the house and children were in Bly, Essex; the uncle lived in London.
2. When the governess arrived at Bly, Mrs. Grose, the housekeeper, was glad as if more than merely relieved.
3. On the evening of the first day, the governess heard and felt things—the cry of a child, faint footsteps.
4. She learned that the little boy, Miles, had been dismissed from school, because of "injury to others."
5. She was told that the former governess had died.
6. After a peaceful time, there came a change which was like the spring of a beast. "Remarkable things presently gave their first sign."

Now the ghostly appearances, given seriatim, are each so vividly presented as to create a permanent impression.

Vision Number 1: a man on top of the tower.

The reality of this impression is achieved by the governess first thinking there is some one in the house about whom she has not been told. Second, she conceives that a tourist has taken a liberty.

Vision Number 2: the same man outside the dining-room window. The governess sees him from within.

The window serves as a frame, to strengthen the picture effect. So strong is the impression this time that the governess acts on it. It is borne in upon her that he has come for some one else. Mrs. Grose enters the dining-room, and sees the governess outside; she runs out and intercepts the governess, as the latter had tried to meet the ghost. Here, the effect of reality is doubled, by substituting the real woman for the ghost man. Between the housekeeper and the governess a scene follows, in which Mrs. Grose says that from the description of the intruder, he is Quint, the master's valet, an evil man. She concludes by saying that he had been found dead, as if from a stone cut caused by a fall. "Yes, Mr. Quint is dead."

Vision Number 3: This visitation occurs by the "Sea of Azof" (a pond in the grounds). Flora tries to prevent the governess's knowing that she, Flora, sees the ghost of Miss Jessel. The woman is in black, "pale and dreadful, on the other side of the lake."

After this episode, the governess talks with Mrs. Grose and hears from her that there was "everything" between Quint and Jessel. The governess fears the children are "lost."

Up to this point in the story, the author has been doling out the necessary exposition, giving the reader just enough to understand clearly the next step. Now, as the governess writes, "I have at last reached the heart of the mystery": Quint and Jessel are haunting the little boy and girl.

Vision Number 4: The governess meets Quint in the early morning on the staircase. The meeting is significant in that the governess feels terror leave her, and knows that she will be capable of enduring the visitations for the sake of her charges. Quint walks away down the staircase.

Vision Number 5: Miss Jessel on the staircase.

The governess becomes convinced that the children are playing a game of policy and fraud. "The curtain rose on the last act of my dreadful drama, and the catastrophe was precipitated." In this instance, the author puts into the mouth of his narrator his own concept of the story as a play. "Dramatise!" "Dramatise!" he constantly urges.

Miles wishes to know when he is going back to school. The fencing match in which the two engage is one of the cleverest sparring passages in short-story literature.

Vision Number 6: The governess, on entering the study, sees Miss Jessel seated at the table.

After this visit, the governess declares to Mrs. Grose that the children are possessed by Quint and Jessel, who are suffering the horrors of the damned, and want the children to share their torments. Another dialogue between Miles and the governess is filled with *double entendres*. At the end of the scene, as the governess exclaims, "I just want you to help me to save you!" the candle is blown out, while the boy shrieks "between terror and jubilation."

Finally, the governess writes for an interview with the master. She leaves the letter lying on the hall table, while with the housekeeper she goes in search of Flora. They observe that she has rowed across to the farther side of the lake. The governess overtakes her, by walking around the lake, and ultimately asks, "Where, my pet, is Miss Jessel?" Miss Jessel appears, again, in

Vision Number 7: She stands, as before, by the lake; obviously Flora sees her, as does the governess. Mrs. Grose is exempt.

Flora turns shrieking from the governess, and is taken into the house by Mrs. Grose. She never sees the governess again; for it is decided that Mrs. Grose shall take her away from Bly.

Vision Number 8: Again, the figure of Quint at the window.

Miles and the governess are in the dining room. She tries to elicit from him that he took the letter. The ghost of Quint looks in, as before. The governess turns

the child away, that he may not be enticed. When he confesses, after an agony, that he stole the letter, the ghost disappears.

Vision Number 9: A final reappearance at the window.

The governess again conquers, in the struggle for the boy's soul. Miles, however, dies under the dispossession. Here, then, ends the story.

The technically perfect effects in description are too obvious for comment. They indent themselves upon the reader's mind with the sharpness of an engraver's tool. Not easily will they be erased.

Rather note here, as at the end of other good ghost stories, the aftermath of conviction. The boy dies, in the supreme effort to free himself from the spirit's domination. From this single instance, which may be expressed in general terms, as the effect on character of the visitation, it is but a step to a series of methods whereby conviction may be gained through the aftermath. Sometimes a warning or a prophecy is fulfilled, as in "The Inn of the Two Witches." In other stories, indisputable evidence compels belief; for example, the cast in the "Mystery" of O'Brien. Again, paradoxically enough, the destruction of evidence is peculiarly convincing; as in Kipling's "At the End of the Passage," where the destroying of the photographic plate seems to say that it bore the record of the Thing Hummil saw. W. W. Jacobs's "The Monkey's Paw" is particularly gratifying in this respect. After the son's spirit has been evoked by the use of the paw, the father—who has exercised the charm—uses it to make his third and last wish; for he

does not desire his wife to see the apparition. The knocking ceases; for the return has been negated by the same spell which caused it. Moreover, such an ending offers satisfaction to the reader who persists, after all, in being a skeptic.

CHAPTER XVI

POPULARITY AND LONGEVITY

Culture of reader a factor in author's popularity; extremes of reading types; their common ground of interest; publishers of fiction satisfy certain demands; striking incident, sentiment, exploitation of sex, humour; reality of the present and romance of the remote; Russian realism; Hamlin Garland; trench realism versus trench romance; demand for rapid action, strong passions, substance rather than form marks the popular audience; qualities of originality and style with reference to popularity and to longevity; Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's testimony; student's answer representative; originality, emotional appeal, and simplicity of style make for longevity; greatness.

Let us assume that the story writer intends to make his appeal to the public of to-day in the foremost centres of civilisation. It is clear that the comparative culture of the reader will enter as a factor into the sum of an author's popularity. What William Dean Howells terms the "boudoir audience" will represent one extreme; the common crowd, the other. Choosing Henry James and O. Henry as representative late writers, we have no difficulty in answering the questions, Which of the two appeals to the boudoir audience? Which to the crowd? Which numbers more readers from one extreme of the scale to the other? Nor does the obvious answer discriminate against either of the authors: it may be said that Henry James is popular with thousands of readers, O. Henry with hundreds of thousands. The tastes of the reading extremes meet in their common interest in

humanity; both desire pictures of life and a compelling narrative. Individual pictures will not serve for both alike; nor will the same narrative compel, alike; nevertheless, in general, these are the common grounds.

To satisfy as far as possible the range of taste in a given audience a publisher of fiction usually tries to meet the demands for 1. Striking incident. The incident may be striking from a subtly psychological consideration or as a lurid motion picture climax is striking. But exciting incident the reader must have. 2. Sentiment. Hereunder, sentiment may range from mushiness to profoundest emotion. The audience at one end of the scale will require more real feeling on the author's part, more of living flame in the characters, less obviousness of emotional machinery than will satisfy the other extreme. 3. Exploitation of sex. The sex story has become rampant in post-war years, partly as a reflection of changing social *mores;* partly to satisfy the society existing under the change. 4. Humour. This quality will be demanded from the extreme which is able to appreciate only overt merriment and horse-play, to the extreme which prefers it as a subtle interfusion throughout serious discourse. Humour leavens the lump, and the audience requires it.

The popular story reflects the present in time; it is romantic in that it often uses a remote setting, exalted characters, and an atmosphere of mystery; it is characterised by rapidity of action and dramatic form; it sets forth striking incidents; it exploits strong and elemental passions; it abounds in vivid detail; it draws by its matter rather than by its manner. Realism, Russian realism, for example, is not popular: it deals with the lives of the lowly—peasants, poor students, criminals; it

emphasises the sordidness and ugliness of life, the trivialities of everyday existence, often made revolting through the author's naturalistic point of view. The discerning reader recognises in realism, however, a powerful reflection of what the average mind scorns as low and disgusting; he recognizes that a reflection of life to be complete must be viewed from many angles and through many eyes. And this totality of reflection is found in the short-story only through the media of many stories and many authors. Hamlin Garland has recorded the history of the middle west pioneers in a series of undoubted merit: "Main Travelled Roads." The portrait of Grant McLane is too sordidly drawn for the average reader's enjoyment; that of Haskins is too painful to look upon. The muck of the barnyard, the slavish labor to pay off the mortgage, the grimy, perspiring bodies flung down to the brief rest of the night—such details fail to entertain him. Their sordidness is nowhere rendered epic by their elevation to high tragedy. Sherwood Anderson's unlettered heroes are dull and commonplace except to the eye that sees with Anderson and understands his purpose as he understands it, in such stories as "I'm a Fool," and "The Triumph of the Egg," or "Alice." The daily life of the soldier has always the possibility of noble adventure; mud and vermin of trenches may emphasise heroic action. A reader in his arm-chair finds them a sympathy-compelling addition to his fiction, even if disagreeably realistic. To the soldier, on the other hand, romance is something quite different from his own experiences. "It's not bombs, nor Kaisers nor Tipperary that men in the trenches think of, it's chiffon."[1]

[1] The Old Lady Shows Her Medals, by J. M. Barrie.

Hand in hand with the desire for remoteness of place, or place at a remove from daily experience, and for nobility of character with the atmosphere of mystery, there is a preference for the reflection of the present. One has but to test the truth of this statement on any numbers of whatever contemporary magazines he may select. It is a preference having its roots in "up-to-dateness," and the fact that the short-story is suited to reflect conditions which have in part determined it as the present day genre.

Rapidity of action was observed to be a characteristic of popularity. "Henry James is too slow," you hear from the reader who prefers shooting the rapids of swift action. Most popular contemporary short-story writers please the general audience in flashing individual pictures quickly or skimming fleetly over the stage of interest. With striking incident or thrilling situation, strong and elemental passions will be preferred: strong love, strong hate, strong revenge; and altogether substance, rather than form, will be demanded by the masses.

Certain of these requisites every story writer does well to supply. But if he would live longer than a day, he must add other characteristics. It has been implied that the popular reader cares nothing for originality; the theme may be banal, the situation outworn. He cares nothing for style. But the elements of originality and style must exist in the work which survives even for an epoch. Added to the best of the popular elements, they contribute favourably to the chances for a writer's longevity. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, commenting on stories that stay, emphasises force of impression from "Some surprise of shock or novelty; some hell or heaven of human feeling, or some grip of absolute strength." As an instance of

stories that have stayed, she recalls one ending on the startling words: "I must have died at ten minutes past one." So the reader of Richard Middleton's "On the Brighton Road" will be shocked by the close: "I died at Crawley this morning. . . ." Instancing the heaven of human feeling, Mrs. Phelps cites "The Brushwood Boy."

Testing this theory that longevity depends partly upon shock or grip of strength, or hell or heaven of human feeling, the present writer asked a class of adults for a list of stories which had lingered with them throughout a number of years. Here is part of a paper characterising the stories that had remained with one man, whose answers I reproduce by permission:

1. "A Child's Dream of a Star," by Charles Dickens.

First I place this story. In doing so I brush aside all technical definitions of the short-story, all thoughts of struggle, of complication, of Brunetière's law of the drama, of "the stark assertion of the hero's will." In sublimity of theme, in simplicity of style, in poetic feeling, in sympathetic revelation of the one transcendent longing of the soul, this story has impressed me as the greatest of all short fiction. "He grew to be a young man; and the star was shining. . . . He grew to be an old man: and the star was shining." It is thirty years since I read this story, but the haunting refrain will abide as long as life lasts. "And the star was still shining; and it shines above his grave."

Only one other story has remained in my memory from early youth. It is entitled "Petherick's Peril," and was published in the *Youth's Companion.* The author I do not remember. Undoubtedly it impressed me on account of the thrilling situation of the hero. A young man had let himself down over a cliff above the sea by means of

a rope, and was intent on hunting birds' eggs upon a narrow ledge, when suddenly the ledge broke off and fell into the sea. The man was left clinging terror-stricken on a few inches of rock with the rope hanging a few feet beyond his reach. Hundreds of feet below the waves were dashing against the cliff, and his brain reeled at the thought that he would soon fall headlong into that pitiless surge. It seemed that he clung there for ages, his fingers slowly relaxing their grip on the rock, his consciousness gradually leaving him—and in his ears the wild cries of the birds, and the murmurs of an approaching storm. There was only one thing to do. He looked toward the rope—and then "jumped straight out over the heaving Atlantic." Yes, he caught it—but it began to slip from its fastening above! Slip, slip, slip. He thrust himself through the noose at the end. Fainting—at last unconscious—he hung swaying. Yes, somebody pulled him up. C. H. T.

Let this stand as representative: stories of original and striking incident, strong emotional appeal, and unadorned simplicity of style will endure. By longevity, however, let us not understand greatness. Only that is great in literature which, according to William P. Trent, "has produced large, important, influential, permanent, original, and unique results both in ourselves and in a majority of readers and critics, past and present."

QUESTIONS OF THE CRITIC

Does this narrative tell one story? What is it? Do you receive a single impression? If more than one, is the story satisfactory? Does the story chiefly illustrate a thesis, present a place or character, or tell the events in a

line of action? Is the story local and temporal in appeal or cosmopolitan and timeless? How is the appeal related to the quality of the story?

Is there a struggle (a chase, a removal of obstacle, fight, for instance), and if so what is it? It not, has the story a pattern or design that compensates for lack of struggle? Is there a clearly defined initial incident? dramatic climax? climax of action? Is the end skilfully linked to the beginning? How? If there is more than one line of interest or of action are the two so combined as to form a well-wrought plot? Is the plot adequate for the length and treatment of the particular story?

What is the method of presentation? Is the author partial to the objective presentation of characters or does he prefer exercising omniscience over their minds (perhaps revealing the full stream of consciousness)? Is the method chosen continued throughout? If the point of view is changed, is there a corresponding gain? What are the advantages of the "spot-light" method? of the "X-ray" method?

How much time is consumed in the action? How much change of place? Would the story be improved by a closer limitation of time and place? Does the nature of the story demand that time and place be extended? If the action ranges widely over time and place, is there a disintegration of the short-story type or genre? Is "local colour," including dialect, handled with discrimination?

How many characters are involved in the action? Are they "real"? Who is the main character? Is there a passive character necessary to the action? A pivotal character necessary to the turning of the action? What is the relation between the main character in the main thread of action and the main character in the minor

thread? Are their parts properly subordinated? Are there too many characters for short-story effect?

Do the characters talk in character? Is the dialogue choppy or is it closely knit? Which method of characterisation is employed to the greatest extent: description, action, conversation, effect on others, etc.? Are the characters anywhere "out of line"? Do their actions and reactions seem natural?

What is the atmosphere? Is it harmonious with the action? What devices of the author secure atmosphere? Have action and character been unified with atmosphere? Is the tempo right? Is the proportion good? Are the clues effectively handled?

Does the story interest you? Why? What constitutes the gripping element? Wherein is the lack of it? What mechanism has the author used to secure emotional response? Have you laughed, been moved to sympathise, or otherwise emotionally stirred? What methods has the author used to create and maintain suspense? Does the story convey an idea larger than itself? Has it originality and style? Does the story in any way try to answer the questions "What is Man?" "What is Life?"

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BIBLIOGRAPHY II

A list of short-stories cited or used for illustration in this volume (indicated by the figure 1), with the addition of others recommended for reading or study (indicated by the figure 2). In the parentheses following titles will be found, as a rule, (a) names of editors of collections and, if necessary, abbreviated titles of collections listed above in Bibliography I, (b) titles of the immediate author's collection, usually followed by the name of the publisher. Many of these stories have been reprinted in collections other than these listed, but limits of space forbid more than the locations given. As far as possible the later general collections are suggested, that the student may have in a small library a number of examples; hence "a" is used quite arbitrarily to indicate these collections. No other preference is intended by the symbol.

Abbreviations for O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories edited by Blanche Colton Williams, are: Williams and the year of the volume; e.g., Williams, 1929, means that the story may be found in O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories (Doubleday, Doran), for the year 1929. Similarly, abbreviations for The Best

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Craddock, Charles Egbert—1. The Dancin' Party at Harrison's Cove (b. In the Tennessee Mountains, Houghton, Mifflin). 2. Way Down in Lonesome Cove (a. Pattee); Taking the Blue Ribbon at the County Fair (a. Ramsay); The Star in the Valley (a. Jessup); The Phantoms of the Footbridge (volume title, Houghton, Mifflin); The Mystery of Witchface Mountain (volume title, Houghton, Mifflin).

Cram, Mildred—2. Stranger Things (a. Williams, 1921); Billy (a. O'Brien, 1924).

Crane, Stephen—1. The Angel Child (b. Whilomville Stories, Harper); The Open Boat (a. Brewster). 2. A Dark-Brown Dog (a. Clark and Lieber). See also Crane's collected works, Knopf.

Crawford, Francis Marion—1. The Upper Berth, The Screaming Skull, The Doll's Ghost, The Dead Smile (b. Wandering Ghosts, Macmillan).

Crowell, Chester T.—1. Margaret Blake (a. Williams, 1924).

Curle, Richard—1. Old Hoskyns (b. Life is a Dream, Doubleday).

Curwood, James Oliver—2. Kazan (author's favorite story, in My Story That I Like Best, Cosmopolitan Magazine Volume, 1924).

Dangerfield, Clinton—1. Lady New Luck (*Liberty*, June 9, 1928).

Daudet, Alphonse—1. The Last Class (a. Williams, A Book of Short Stories; Clark and Lieber); The Siege of Berlin (a. Lieber and Williams, A Panorama of the Short Story). 2. Legend of the Man with the Golden Brain (b. Letters from My Mill); The Three Low Masses (a. Rudwin).

Davis, Richard Harding—1. My Disreputable Friend, Mr. Raegen, Gallegher (Gallegher, Scribner); A Charmed Life

(b. Once upon a Time, Scribner); The Man Who Could Not Lose (volume title, Scribner). 2. The Boy Scout, The Frame-Up, Billy and the Big Stick, Somewhere in France (b. Somewhere in France, Scribner); The Deserter (volume title, Scribner); The Bar Sinister (volume title, Scribner); The Derelict (b. Ranson's Folly, Scribner); A Leander of the East River (b. Van Bibber and Others, Scribner); The Long Arm, The God of Coincidence (b. The Lost Road, Scribner).

Dawson, Coningsby—2. Outside of Eden (b. Outside of Eden, Dodd, Mead); Unknown Soldier (volume title, Doubleday).

Delafield, E. M.—2. Terminus, The Luggage in the Hall (b. Entertainment, Harper); The Appeal (a. O'Brien—British—1924)—Holiday Group (a. Georgian, 1926).

De La Mare, Walter—1. Seaton's Aunt (a. O'Brien—British—1922); The Nap (a. Gerould; b. The Connoisseur, Knopf); The Connoisseur, Mr. Kempe, Pretty Poll (b. The Connoisseur).

Deland, Margaret—2. The Thief (b. Around Old Chester, Harper); Many Waters (b. R. J.'s Mother and Others, Harper); The Stuffed Animal House (a. Pattee; b. Dr. Lavendar's People, Harper); Good for the Soul, Miss Maria (b. Old Chester Tales, Harper).

Dell, Floyd—1. Phantom Adventure (a. Williams, 1923; O'Brien, 1924).

Delmar, Viña—2. Uptown Woman (*Red Book,* July, 1928); John Jones and Wife (*Hearst's International and Cosmopolitan,* January, 1928); Surprise Party (*Bookman,* July, 1928). See also Loose Ladies (collection, Harcourt, Brace).

Derieux, Samuel A.—2. The Destiny of Dan VI (a. Williams, Thrice Told Tales); The Trial in Tom Belcher's Store (a. Williams, 1919); Wild Bill McCorkle (a. World's Best, 1925); Comet (a. Williams, 1921); The Sixth Shot (a. Williams, 1922).

Dickens, Charles—1. A Child's Dream of a Star. 2. The Queer Client (a. Clark and Lieber); The Convict's Return (a. Lieber and Williams; b. Pickwick Papers).

Dickenson, May Freud—2. The Mouse (a. Copy—1925).

Dickson, Harris—2. Sunlover Sam Stories (collection). Coffin Club Stories (collection).

Dobie, Charles Caldwell—1. The Open Window (a. Goodman; O'Brien, 1918); Laughter (a. O'Brien, 1917; The Arrested Moment, Harper); The Hands of the Enemy (a. Harper Prize; O'Brien, 1925; Gerould; b. The Arrested Moment); All or Nothing (a. Royster); The Thrice Bereft Widow of Hung Gow (a. Williams, 1926). 2. Horse and Horse (a. Williams, 1924; b. The Arrested Moment); The Leech (a. Mirrielees; b. The Arrested Moment).

Douglas, Marjory Stoneman—1. He Man (a. Williams, 1927); The Peculiar Treasure of Kings (a. Williams, 1928).

Doyle, Sir Arthur C.—1. The Red Headed League (See above, page 112 and a. Jessup); Giant Maximin (b. The Last Galley). 2. The Dancing Men (b. The Return of Sherlock Holmes, Doubleday); The Leather Funnel (b. Round the Fire Stories); The Adventure of the Speckled Band (b. The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Harper); Silver Blaze (b. The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes, Harper); The Disintegration Machine (b. The Maracot Deep and Other Stories, Doubleday, 1929).

Dunbar, Olivia Howard—1. The Shell of Sense (a. Scarborough, Famous Ghost Stories; b. *Harper's*, December, 1908).

Dreiser, Theodore—1. The Lost Phoebe (a. O'Brien, 1916, Clark and Lieber; Brewster); A Mayor and His People (a. Williams, Short Stories for College Classes; b. Twelve Men, Boni and Liveright). 2. Nigger Jeff (b. Free and Other Stories, Boni and Liveright).

Duncan, Norman—1. A Romance of Whooping Harbor (b. Quaint Courtships, Harper); The Last Shot in the Locker (b. Billy Topsail, M. D., Revell—See Preface above).

Dunsany, Lord—2. Collection: Fifty-One Tales, Little, Brown.

Diver, Maud—2. Sunia, Complete Surrender, Escape, Requital (b. Siege Perilous, Houghton, Mifflin).

Duranty, Walter—1. The Parrot (a. Williams, 1928); Leningrad's Lucky House (*Century*, March, 1929).

Dwight, H. G.—1. The Pasha's Garden (b. Stamboul Nights, Doubleday). 2. The Leopard of the Sea (a. Goodman); The Emperor of Elam (a. O'Brien, 1917; b. The Emperor of Elam and Other Tales, Doubleday).

Ellerbe, Alma and Paul—"Done Got Over" (a Williams, 1927).

Elliott, Sarah Barnwell—2. Without the Courts, An Incident (b. An Incident and Other Happenings, Harper).

Ertz, Susan—2. Wind of Complication (volume title, Appleton).
Fauset, Arthur Huff—1. Symphonesque (a. Williams, 1926; O'Brien, 1926).
Ferber, Edna—2. Hey, Taxi! (*Hearst's International,* January, 1928); 9 to 5 (*Hearst's,* August); Home Girl (a. O'Brien, 1923); Every Other Thursday (b. Mother Knows Best, Doubleday); Roast Beef Medium (a. Pattee); Gigolo (volume title, Doubleday); The Gay Old Dog (a. O'Brien, 1917; Robinson, K.); Cheerful—by Request (volume title, Doubleday).
Finger, Charles J.—2. The Lizard God (a. O'Brien, 1921); Blood's Great Theft (b. Tales from Silver Lands, Doubleday); Tales Worth Telling (volume title, Century).
Fitzgerald, F. Scott—2. The Camel's Back (a. Williams, 1920); The Pusher-in-the-Face (a. Overton); The Jelly-Bean (a. Gerould); All the Sad Young Men (volume title, Scribner); Two for a Cent (a. O'Brien, 1922); Gretchen's Forty Winks (a. Aces, Putnam).
Foote, John Taintor—2. The Look of Eagles (volume title, Appleton).
Forman, Justus Miles—1. Greater Love (*Harper's,* April, 1908).
Fox, John, Jr.—1. Christmas Eve on Lonesome (volume title, Scribner).
France, Anatole—1. The Procurator of Judea (a. Williams, Short Stories for College Classes; Cournos; b. France's Golden Tales, Dodd, Mead); Our Lady's Juggler (a. Clark and Lieber; Lieber and Williams, A Panorama); Lucifer (a. Rudwin); The Mass of Shadows (a. Scarborough, Famous Ghost Stories).
Frankau, Gilbert—2. The Parrot, My Friend Batstone, One Week at the Ritz, Mustard-Pot, Matchmaker (b. Men, Maids, and Mustard-Pot, Century Co.); Who Killed Castelvetri? (a. Knox and Harrington).
Freeman, Mary Wilkins—1. A New England Nun, A Village Lear, A Village Singer, Calla Lilies and Hannah, The Revolt of 'Mother' (b. A New England Nun, Harper); (For The Revolt, see also, a. Mikels; for A Village Singer, see also, a. Pattee; for a New England Nun, see also, a. Lieber and Williams); The Shadows on the Wall (a. Scarborough, Famous Ghost Stories; b. The Wind in the Rosebush,

Harper); A Humble Romance (volume title, Harper). 2. The Amethyst Comb, The Umbrella Man, Big Sister Solly (b. The Copy Cat, Harper); The Pink Shawls, The Fair Lavinia (b. The Fair Lavinia, Harper); Old Woman Magoun (b. The Winning Lady, Harper); Evalina's Garden b. Silence, Harper); The Ring with the Green Stone (b. Edgewater People).

Freeman, R. Austin—1. The Pathologist to the Rescue (a. Wright).

Frost, Meigs O.—2. The Shackles of Service (a. World's Best, 1925).

Gaither, Rice—2. The Phantom Taxicab (*McCall's Magazine*, January, 1924).

Gale, Zona—1. Yellow Gentians and Blue (volume title, Appleton); The Biography of Blade (a. O'Brien, 1924; World's Best, 1925; b. Yellow Gentians and Blue); Bridal Pond (a. Williams, 1928). 2. In the Lobby (a. Goodman; b. Yellow Gentians and Blue); Evening (a. O'Brien, 1926); Exit Charity (a. Aces, Putnam).

Galsworthy, John—1. Defeat (a. Robinson, K.); A Strange Thing (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott, 31 Stories); A Portrait (b. A Motley, Heineman, London, 1910). 2. Quality (a. Lieber and Williams; Mikels); Late—299, The Hedonist, Courage (b. Caravan, Scribner); The Man Who Kept His Word (a. Ward); Five Tales (volume title, Scribner).

Garland, Hamlin—1. Up the Coulé (b. Main Travelled Roads, Macmillan); The Lion's Paw (a. Williams, A Book of Short Stories). 2. The Return of a Private (a. Ashmun; b. Main Travelled Roads); Drifting Crane (a. Lieber and Williams; b. Prairie Folks); Among the Corn Rows (a. Pattee; Jessup—part of the story reprinted by each of these anthologists; b. Main Travelled Roads); William Bacon's Hired Man (b. Other Main Travelled Roads, Macmillan).

Garshin, W. M.—1. Four Days (a. Cournos; b. The Signal, Knopf).

Gautier, Theophile—2. The Mummy's Foot (a. Clark and Lieber; Scarborough, Humorous Ghost Stories).

Gerould, Katherine Fullerton—1. Vain Oblations, On the Staircase (b. Vain Oblations, Scribner); The Dominant Strain, The Weaker Vessel, The Great Tradition (b. The Great Tradition, Scribner); The Hand of Jim Fane (*Harper's*,

August, 1917); The Knight's Move (a. O'Brien, 1917); The Wax Doll (a. Gerould; b. Valiant Dust, Scribner); The Penalties of Artemis (a. Knickerbocker; b. Valiant Dust); Sea Green, The Toad and the Jewel (b. Valiant Dust). 2. French Eva (a. O'Brien, 1921); An Army with Banners (a. O'Brien, 1925); Emma Blair (a. Pattee); Habakkuk (a. O'Brien, 1920; b. Valiant Dust); The Bird in the Bush (a. Robinson, K).

Gibbon, Perceval—2. The Connoisseur (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott, 31 Stories).

Girard, Pierre—2. John's Extraordinary Metamorphosis (a. Eaton—Continental—1925-1926).

Gissing, George—2. The Fate of Humphrey Small, Honeymoon, The Schoolmaster's Vision, The Tyrant's Apology (b. A Victim of Circumstances, Houghton, Mifflin, 1928); Fate and the Apothecary (b. House of Cobwebs); An Old Maid's Triumph, Our Mr. Jupp (a. Short Stories of Today, Harrap, London).

Glasgow, Ellen—2. The Shadowy Third (volume title, Doubleday); Romance and Sally Byrd (a. World's Best, 1925).

Glaspell, Susan—2. A Jury of Her Peers (a. O'Brien, 1917).

Glass, Montague—2. The Sixth McNally (a. Overton; b. Y'Understand, Doubleday); Well, Why Not? (a. My Favorite Story, Internat'l Magazine Co.; b. Lucky Numbers, Doubleday).

Goodloe, Abbie Carter—1. Claustrophobia (a. Williams, 1926; Brewster).

Goodman, Henry—2. The Button (a. O'Brien, 1923).

Gogol, Nikolai—1. The Cloak (or Overcoat, or Mantel) (a. Cournos; b. volume title, Stokes); St. John's Eve (a. Clark and Lieber).

Gorky, Maxim—1. Chelkash (or Tchelkache) (a. Cournos; b. Twenty-Six and One, Brentano); Orloff and His Wife (volume title, Scribner); The Freak, The Hunchback (b. Tales of Two Countries, Huebsch) 2. Her Lover (a. Lieber and Williams, A Panorama); One Autumn Night (a. Clark and Lieber; b. Thomas Seltzer's Best Russian Short Stories, Boni and Liveright); Comrades (a. Jessup).

Graham, R. B.—2. Mektub (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott, 31 Stories).

Grahame, Kenneth—2. Dream Days (volume title, Dodd, Mead); The Golden Age (volume title, Dodd, Mead).

Greene, Frederick Stuart—1. A Cat of the Canebrake (a. O'Brien, 1916; Farrington); The Bunker Mouse (a. O'Brien, 1917; Ward). 2. The Black Pool (a. Greene); Molly McGuire, 14 (a. Williams, A Book of Short Stories).

Gunnarsson, Gunnar—2. The Dark Mountains (a. Denmark's Best Stories, Norton).

Hackett, Francis—2. Unshapely Things (a. Williams, 1925).

Hale, Edward Everett—1. The Man without a Country. 2. My Double and How He Undid Me (a. Howells; Pattee).

Hall, Holworthy—2. The Luck of the Devil (*Century,* June, 1916); The Last Train Back (*McClure's,* March, 1914).

Hallet, Richard Matthews—2. Foot-Loose (a. Goodman); The Razor of Pedro Dutel (a. Greene); Making Port (a. O'Brien, 1916); The Harbor Master (a. O'Brien, 1921); A Bad Washing (*Saturday Evening Post,* May 26, 1928).

Hardy, Thomas—1 The Three Strangers (a. Sherman; Schweikert; Jessup); An Imaginative Woman (b. Wessex Tales, Harper); The Melancholy Hussar of the German Legion (b. Life's Little Ironies, Harper); The Grave by the Handpost, A Mere Interlude (b. A Changed Man and Other Tales. Harper); On the Western Circuit (b. Life's Little Ironies). 2. Squire Petrick's Lady (a. Clark and Lieber); The Withered Arm (a. Great Ghost Stories, French); Old Mrs. Chundle (*Ladies Home Journal,* February, 1929).

Hare, Amory—1. Sung in the Street (*Harper's Bazar,* February, 1929). 2. Three Lumps of Sugar (a. O'Brien, 1927).

Harris, Joel Chandler—2. The Wonderful Tar Baby Story (b. Uncle Remus, His Songs and Sayings, Appleton).

Harrison, Henry Sydnor—1. Miss Hinch (a. Gerould; Knickerbocker).

Hart, Francis Noyes—1. "Contact!" (a. Williams, 1920; Williams, Thrice Told Tales, b. "Contact" Doubleday); 2. Green Gardens (a O'Brien, 1921).

Harte, Bret—1. The Luck of Roaring Camp, Tennessee's Partner, The Outcasts of Poker Flat, Miggles, An Idyl of Red Gulch (b. The Luck of Roaring Camp, Houghton Mifflin); Colonel Starbottle for the Plaintiff (*Harper's,* March, 1901; b. Openings in the Old Trail, Haughton Mifflin), A Mercury of the Foot-hills (b. Openings in the Old Trail; b. Writings of Bret Harte, Vol. 17, Houghton Mifflin); Prosper's Old

Mother (*Harper's*, April, 1902). 2. The Postmistress of Laurel Run (a. Schweikert; Lieber and Williams).

Hartman, Lee Foster—1. Mr. Smith (a. Williams, 1928). 2. The Judgment of Vulcan (a. Williams, 1920; O'Brien, 1920).

Hawthorne, Nathaniel—1. Rappaccini's Daughter, The Birthmark, Roger Malvin's Burial (b. Mosses from an Old Manse); The Ambitious Guest, The Minister's Black Veil, David Swan, Lady Eleanore's Mantle, Wakefield, The Snow Image (b. Twice Told Tales). 2. Feathertop (b. Mosses from an Old Manse); The Gray Champion, Dr. Heidegger's Experiment (b. Twice Told Tales); The Great Stone Face.

Hearn, Lafcadio—2. Reconciliation, The Corpse-Rider (b. Shadowings, Little, Brown); Banjo Jim's Story (a. Pattee); Of a Dancing Girl (a. Lieber and Williams).

Hecht, Ben—2. Winkelburg (a. O'Brien, 1922); Broken Necks (volume title).

Hemingway, Ernest—1. The Killers (a. Williams, 1927; O'Brien, 1927; Brewster, 1928, Mirrielees, 1929; Goodman, 1929; Brown, 1929; b. Men without Women, Scribner); The Undefeated (a. O'Brien, 1926; b. Men without Women). 2. My Old Man (a. O'Brien, 1923); Fifty Grand (b. Men without Women).

Henry, O.—1. The Gift of the Magi, The Green Door, Tobin's Palm, A Service of Love, An Unfinished Story, The Furnished Room, From the Cabby's Seat, After Twenty Years (The Four Million); A Lickpenny Lover, A Comedy in Rubber, Transients in Arcadia, The Shocks of Doom, The Plutonian Fire (The Voice of the City); The Girl and the Habit, Strictly Business, Proof of the Pudding, A Municipal Report (Strictly Business); The Theory and the Hound, The Hypotheses of Failure, The World and the Door, Girl, A Little Local Color, A Blackjack Bargainer, Calloway's Code, The Whirligig of Life (Whirligigs); The Last of the Troubadours, The Church with an Overshot Wheel, Makes the Whole World Kin, Jimmy Hayes and Muriel (Sixes and Sevens); A Double-Dyed Deceiver, A Retrieved Reformation, Roads of Destiny (Roads of Destiny); The Caballero's Way, The Ransom of Mack, Christmas by Injunction, A Chaparral Prince (Heart of the West); The Hiding of Black Bill, No Story (Options); Two Thanksgiving Day

Gentlemen, The Trimmed Lamp (The Trimmed Lamp); The Atavism of John Tom Little Bear (Rolling Stone). The titles in parentheses are of volumes, published by Doubleday, Doran. See also the one-volume edition of O. Henry's works, same publishers.

Heidenstam, Verner von—2. A Clean White Shirt (a. Sweden's Best Stories).

Hergesheimer, Joseph—2. "Triall by Armes" (a. O'Brien, 1927); Bread (a. Robinson, K.); The Thrush in the Hedge (a. Pattee); The Meeker Ritual (a. O'Brien, 1919); The Token (a. O'Brien, 1922); Tol'able David, The Flower of Spain (b. The Happy End, Knopf); Quiet Cities (volume title, Knopf).

Heyse, Paul—2. The Fury (L'Arrabiata) (a. Clark and Lieber; Lieber and Williams, A Panorama).

Heyward, DuBose—1. Crown's Bess (a. Williams, 1925); The Half-Pint Flask (a. O'Brien, 1927. See also the volume, Farrar and Rinehart, 1929).

Hope, Anthony—1. The Little Wretch, and 2. The House Opposite (The Dolly Dialogues, Holt). 2. The Philosopher in the Apple Orchard (Comedies of Courtship).

Hopper, James, M.—2. When It Happens (a. O'Brien, 1927); Celestine (a. Williams, 1923); Caybigan (volume title).

Howard, Sidney—1. The Homesick Ladies (a. Williams, 1929). 2. A Likeness of Elizabeth (b. Three Flights Up, Scribner).

Howells, William Dean—1. A Sleep and a Forgetting, Editha (b. Between the Dark and the Daylight, Harper). 2. The Pearl (*Harper's* August, 1916).

Hughes, Llewellyn—1. Lady Wipers—of Ypres (a. O'Brien, 1928).

Hughes, Richard—2. The Ghost (a. Georgian, 1925); Poor Man's Inn (a. O'Brien—British—1925); Lochinvarovic (a. Gerould). The Stranger (a. O'Brien-British-1923).

Hughes, Rupert—2. Going for a Ride (*Hearst's*, August, 1928); Grudges (a. O'Brien, 1924); The Stick-in-the-Muds (a. O'Brien, 1920); Long Ever Ago: collection, Harper, 1919; The Last Rose of Summer (volume title).

Hurst, Fannie—1. Humoresque (a. Williams, 1919). 2. Give This Little Girl a Hand (a. O'Brien, 1928); Seven Candles (a. O'Brien, 1923); A Good Provider (a. Robinson, K.); She Walks in Beauty (a. Goodman); White Apes (b. Song

of Life, Knopf); T. B. (a. O'Brien, 1915); In Memoriam (b. Every Soul Hath Its Song, Harper); Ice Water, Pl——! (a. Schweikert; O'Brien, 1917); Get Ready the Wreaths (a. O'Brien, 1917); Madagascar, Ho! (a. Samples, Boni and Liveright, 1927).

Hutchinson, Ray Coryton—1. Every Twenty Years (a. O'Brien —British—1928).

Huxley, Aldous—1. The Gioconda Smile (a. Georgian, 1924). 2. Little Mexican (a. Georgian, 1925); Fairy Godmother (a. Georgian, 1926); Hubert and Minnie (a. Lieber and Williams; b. Young Archimedes, Doran); Young Archimedes volume title, 1924); Half Holiday (a. O'Brien—British—1926).

Irving, Washington—1. Dolph Heyliger's Ghost, The Student of Salamanca, The Stout Gentleman (b. Bracebridge Hall); Rip Van Winkle, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, The Spectre Bridegroom (b. The Sketch Book). Most of Irving's best tales have been reprinted many times.

Irwin, Inez Haynes—1. The Spring Flight (a. Williams, 1924; World's Best, 1925).

Irwin, Wallace—2. The Transplanted Ghost (a. Scarborough); You Can't Get Away from Your Grandfather (b. Pilgrims Into Folly, Doran); The Challenge at the Border (*Collier's* July 17, 1926).

Irwin, Will—2. Not without Honor (*Everybody's*, November, 1925); Between the Lines (*McClure's*, August, 1928).

Jacobs, Marguerite—1. Singing Eagles (a. Williams, 1926; World's Best, 1926).

Jacobs, W. W.—1. The Monkey's Paw (a. Knickerbocker; Schweikert; Ashmun; b. The Lady of the Barge, Dodd, Mead); The Money Box, Lawyer Quince, The Third String (b. Odd Craft, Scribner); Homeward Bound, Self Help, Peter's Pence (b. Sailors' Knots, Scribner); The Changeling, A Love Knot (b. Short Cruises, Scribner); Back to Back, The Weaker Vessel, Easy Money (b. Night Watches, Scribner); The Toll-House (a. Pence; b. Sailors' Knots); The Lady of the Barge, In the Library, Captain Rogers (b. The Lady of the Barge). 2. A Black Affair (b. Many Cargoes, Stokes); Smoked Skipper, A Safety Match, Rule of Three (b. More Cargoes, Stokes); The Boatswain's Mate, Bob's Redemption (b. Captains All, Scrib-

ner); Fine Feathers (b. The Ship's Company, Scribner).

James, Henry—1. The Turn of the Screw (b. The Two Magics, Macmillan); The Real Thing (a. Williams, Short Stories for College Classes; b. The Real Thing, Macmillan); The Tree of Knowledge, The Real Right Thing, Europe, The Third Person, Paste, Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie, Maud Evelyn, The Great Condition (b. The Soft Side, Methuen, London); The Point of View (b. The Siege of London, Century Co., 1882); The Madonna of the Future (b. The Passionate Pilgrim, Houghton, Mifflin); The Beast in the Jungle, Flickerbridge. The Tone of Time, The Beldonald Holbein (b. The Better Sort, Scribner); The Jolly Corner (b. Volume 17 collected works, Scribner). 2. The Lesson of the Master (a. Brewster; b. volume title, Macmillan); The Altar of the Dead (b. Terminations); The Story in It (a. Clark and Lieber; b. The Better Sort); Mora Montravers, Crapy Cornelia (b. The Finer Grain, Scribner); Travelling Companions, De Grey: A Romance (b. Travelling Companions, Boni and Liveright); A Day of Days (b. A Landscape Painter, Scott and Seltzer, 1919); The Visits (b. The Private Life, Harper, 1893); The Figure in the Carpet (b. Embarrassments, Macmillan). Scribner, for collected works.

Jesse, F. Tennyson—1. Greater Love Hath No Man (b. Many Latitudes, Knopf, 1928). 2. Featherbeds (a. World's Best, 1926); Why Senath Married (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott, 31 Stories); The Man with Two Mouths (a. Georgian, 1922; b. Beggars on Horseback, Doran); Baker's Fury (a. Georgian, 1925); Comfort (a. O'Brien—British—1923).

Jewett, Sara Orne—1. A White Heron, Marsh Rosemary, News from Petersham, The Dulham Ladies (b. A White Heron); Miss Tempy's Watchers (a. Clark and Lieber; b. Tales of New England); Fame's Little Day (b. The Life of Nancy); The Queen's Twin (b. The Queen's Twin). 2. Tom's Husband (b. The Mate of the Daylight); A native of Winby (a. Pattee; b. volume title); By the Morning Boat (a. Jessup; b. Strangers and Wayfarers); Miss Esther's Guest (b. A Native of Winby). Titles listed under "b" are of volumes published by Houghton, Mifflin.

Johnson, Fanny Kemble—1. The Persistent Little Fool (a. Mirrielees); 2. The Strange Looking Man (a. O'Brien, 1917).

Johnson, Nunnally—1. The Actor (a. Williams, 1928); Good Old Uncle Homer (a. Williams, Short Stories for College Classes).

Johnston, Mary—1. Elephants through the Country (a. Williams, 1929). 2. The Baptizing (*Ladies Home Journal,* April, 1929); Black Lace (*Ladies Home Journal,* August, 1928).

Jordan, Elizabeth—1. The Comforter (a. Williams, A Book of Short Stories); 2. Olive's First Story (*Harper's,* April, 1913); May Iverson Tackles Life (volume title, Harper's); The Little Red-Haired Girl (*Chicago Tribune,* October 31, 1926); Ally Takes a Stand (*Collier's,* December 29, 1928); Ruth Herrick's Assignment, Mrs. Ogilvie's Local Color, Miss Van Dyke's Best Story (b. Tales of the City Room, Scribner); Man Proposes, Philip's "Furnis Man" (b. Lovers' Knots, Harper).

Joyce, James—2. Ivy Day in the Committee Room (a. Newman; Brewster; b. Dubliners, Huebsch); Araby (a. Brewster; b. Dubliners); A Painful Case (a. Gerould; b. Dubliners).

Kaye-Smith, Sheila—1. A Wedding-Morn (a. O'Brien—British —1928); Mrs. Adis (a. Georgian, 1922; b. Joanna Godden Married, Harper). 2. Old Gadgett (a. O'Brien, 1923).

Kelland, Clarence Budington—2. The Case of the Demolished Lives (*Pictorial Review,* February, 1928); Medal (*Ladies Home Journal,* June, 1926; The Gods of Chance (*Delineator,* January, 1927); Comedy (*Collier's,* September 15, 1928); Corpus Delicti (*Saturday Evening Post,* February 2, 1929); Simeon Small—Dress Reformer (*Harper's,* June, 1916); Simeon Small's Business Career (*Harper's* September, 1916).

Kelly, Eleanor Mercein—1. Monkey Motions (a. Williams, 1927); Basquerie (a. Williams, 1926; Knickerbocker; b. Basquerie, Harper). 2. Modo Correcto, Mimosa Glances, The Etcheonda, The Road Away (b. The Book of Bette, Harper, 1929).

Kelly, Myra—2. A Christmas Present for a Lady (b. Little Citizens, Doubleday).

Kerr, Sophie—2. Wild Earth (a. Williams, 1921); Bad Little Egg, Knife and Fork (b. Confetti, Doran); Cedars Must Have the Wind (*Ladies Home Journal,* March, 1929).

Kipling, Rudyard—1. At the End of the Passage, Bertran and Bimi, The City of Dreadful Night, The Courting of Dinah

Shadd, The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney, Little Tobrah, Moti-Guj, The Mark of the Beast, The Man Who Was, The Return of Imray (b. Life's Handicap); Beyond the Pale, Lispeth (b. Plain Tales); Baa, Baa, Black Sheep, Wee Willie Winkie, The Man Who Would Be King, My Own True Ghost Story, A Second-Rate Woman (b. Under the Deodars); The Brushwood Boy, The Maltese Cat (b. The Day's Work); "Wireless," They (b. Traffics and Discoveries); The House Surgeon (b. Actions and Reactions); The Last of the Stories (b. Abaft the Funnel, B. W. Dodge and Co., 1909); A Matter of Fact (b. Many Inventions); The Phantom 'Rickshaw (a. Cournos; b. volume title); Mary Postgate, Regulus, Swept and Garnished (b. A Diversity of Creatures); Sea Constables (b. Debits and Credits); The Eyes of Asia (volume title). 2. Without Benefit of Clergy, On Greenhow Hill (b. Life's Handicap); His Majesty the King (b. Under the Deodars); A Habitation Enforced (b. Actions and Reactions); The Village That Voted the Earth Was Flat, The Dog Hervey, In the Same Boat (b. A Diversity of Creatures); False Dawn (a. Hastings, Clough, Mason); His Gift, The Son of His Father, "Stalky" (b. Land and Sea Tales for Boys and Girls). Titles listed under "b," volumes published by Doubleday.

Kniffin, Harry Anable—2. Per Contra (a. Williams, Thrice Told Tales); The Tribute (a. Williams, 1921).

Komroff, Manuel—1. The Christian Bite (a. O'Brien, 1926). 2. How Does It Feel to Be Free (a. Goodman; O'Brien, 1925); The Little Master of the Sky (a. O'Brien, 1921). See the volumes, The Grace of Lambs, and The Voice of Fire, Boni and Liveright.

Kuprin, Alexander—2. A Slav Soul, The Idiot, Hamlet, The Elephant, A Clump of Lilacs, Cain (A Slav Soul, Putnam); The Jewess (The Bracelet of Garnets, Scribner); Captain Rybrinkoff (a. Eaton, 1923-1924); Seasickness (a. Eaton, 1925-1926).

Kyne, Peter B.—2. Soldier Sleep (*Collier's* October, 1, 1927); Chivalry (*Collier's*, September 1, 1928); The Three God-Fathers (volume title); Point (a. My Story That I Like Best, Cosmopolitan Magazine Volume, 1924.)

Lagerlof, Selma—2. The Romance of a Fisherman's Wife (b. Invisible Links, Little, Brown); The Legend of the Christmas

Rose (a. Sweden's Best); A Christmas Guest (a. Ashmun); The Outlaws (a. Lieber and Williams; Short Story Classics, P. F. Collier, 1907); The Eclipse (a. Clark and Lieber, tr. by Velma Swanston Howard).

Lane, Rose Wilder—1. Innocence (a. Williams, 1922; Williams, Short Stories for College Classes; Knickerbocker); Yarbwoman (a. O'Brien, 1927); Harvest (*Harper's* January, 1929).

Lardner, Ring W.—1. Haircut (a. O'Brien, 1925; Brewster; Gerould; b. Round Up, Scribner, 1929) The Golden Honeymoon (a. O'Brien, 1922; b. Round Up); The Love Nest b. Round Up, and volume title, Scribner); There Are Smiles, Contract, Anniversary, Liberty Hall, Dinner, Ex-Parte, Travelogue (b. Round Up). 2. Champion (a. Goodman; b. Round Up, and How to Write Short Stories, Scribner); Zone of Quiet (a. Overton; b. Round Up, and The Love Nest); I Can't Breathe (a. My Favorite Story, International Magazine Co.).

Larsson, Genevieve—2. Witch Mary (a. Williams, 1923).

Lawrence, D. H.—1. Tickets, Please (a. Gerould; b. England, My England, Thomas Seltzer); The Shades of Spring (a. Newman); Two Blue Birds (a. Lieber and Williams); The Shadow in the Rose Garden (a. Georgian, 1922; b. The Prussian Officer, Huebsch); The Horse Dealer's Daughter (a. O'Brien—British—1923); The Woman Who Rode Away (a. O'Brien—British—1926; b. volume title, Knopf); Jimmy and the Desperate Woman (a. O'Brien—British—1925); Rex (a. Dial); The Lovely Lady (a. The Black Cap, Asquith).

Leacock, Stephen—1. The People Just Back from Europe, The Man with the Adventure Story, One Crowded Quarter Second and 2. Old Junk and New Money, From My Friend the Reporter, The Great Detective (b. Short Circuits, Dodd, Mead); The Snoopopaths (b. Further Foolishness, Dodd, Mead); A Hero in Homespun (b. Nonsense Novels, Dodd, Mead); The Transit of Venus (a. L. W. Smith, Short Stories).

Leech, Margaret—1. Manicure (a. Williams, 1929; O'Brien, 1929).

Lefevre, Edwin—2. The Woman and Her Bonds (b. Wall Street

Stories, Harper. See also The Worker and His Work, compiled by Stella Stewart Center, Lippincott).

Le Gallienne, Richard—2. The Youth of Lady Constantia, The Shadow of the Rose, The Woman in Possession, The Household Gods, The Two Ghosts (b. Painted Shadows, Little, Brown); The Haunted Orchard (a. Scarborough, Famous Ghost Stories).

Lemmon, Robert—1. The Bamboo Trap (a. Williams, 1923).

Leslie, Shane—1. The Hospital Nurse (a. The Black Cap, Asquith).

Lewis, Sinclair—2. Young Man Axelbrod (a. Schweikert); The Willow Walk (a. O'Brien, 1918.)

Lieferant, Henry, and Saltzberg, Sylvia—2. At Dusk We Met (a. Humphrey, Best Love Stories of 1925, Dodd,Mead).

Lincoln, Joseph—2. Ogden Williams and the Johnny Cake (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott, 28 Humorous Stories); The Mare and the Motor (*Golden Book*, April, 1926).

Locke, William J.—2. The Golden Journey of Mr. Paradyne, Pontifex, A Spartan of the Hills (b. Stories Near and Far, Dodd, Mead); The Joyous Adventures of Aristide Pujol (collection, Dodd, Mead).

London, Jack—1. Love of Life (title story, Macmillan); To Build a Fire (a. Ashmun, b. Lost Face, Macmillan); 2. The League of the Old Men—author's favorite story—in Children of the Frost, Macmillan); The Shadow and the Flash (b. Moon Face, Macmillan), The House of Mapuhi, The Seed of McCoy (b. South Sea Tales, Macmillan); The White Silence (b. A Son of the Wolf, Houghton Mifflin); The Faith of Men (title story, Macmillan); When God Laughs (title story, Macmillan); The Madness of John Harned (b. The Night-Born, Century Co.); The Proud Goat of Aloysius Pankburn (b. A Son of the Sun, Doubleday).

Lyons, Arthur Neil—1. Sixpenny Pieces (volume title); Love in a Mist (b. Arthur's). 2. Mrs. Permint's Auction Sale, The Man in the Grey Hat, Three-Pun-Ten, Granfer Haffenden's Sunday (b. A Market Bundle, Dodd, Mead).

McFee, William—2. Deckers on the Coast (a. O'Brien—British—1924); Captain Musker's Vacation (*Red Book*, May, 1928); The Roving Heart (*Red Book*, July, 1927).

Machen, Arthur—2. The Bowmen (a. Scarborough, Famous Ghost Stories; The Bowmen, Putnam's); The White People,

The Great God Pan, The Three Impostors, The Red Hand (b. The House of Souls, London, Grant Richards); The Islington Mystery (a. The Black Cap, Asquith); The Black Seal (a. The Omnibus of Crime; b. The Three Impostors, Knopf, 1924).

Mahoney, James—2. The Hat of Eight Reflections (a. Williams, 1923).

Mann, Thomas—2. A Railway Accident (a. Lieber and Williams); Death in Venice, Tristan (b. Death in Venice, Knopf).

Manning, Marie—1. Buffy's Hegira (*Harper's,* July, 1914).

Mansfield, Katherine—1. The Daughters of the Late Colonel (a. Robinson, K.; b. The Garden Party, Knopf); A Dill Pickle (a. Brewster; b. Bliss, Knopf); Life of Ma Parker (a. Brewster; b. The Garden Party, Knopf); Pictures (a. Georgian, 1925; b. Bliss); The Fly (a. O'Brien—British—1923; b. The Dove's Nest, London; Constable, 1923); The Doll's House (b. The Dove's Nest); Mr. Reginald Peacock's Day (a. Mirrielees; b. Bliss). 2. The Apple Tree (a. Lieber and Williams—First appearance in any book); The Samuel Josephs (a. O'Brien—British—1924); A Cup of Tea (b. The Dove's Nest); The Little Girl (volume title, Knopf); The Little Governess (b. Bliss); The Young Girl (b. The Garden Party); In a German Pension (volume title, Knopf); Marriage à la Mode (a. Jessup; b. The Garden Party).

Marquand, J. P.—2. Good Morning, Major (a. O'Brien, 1927); Mr. Goof (*Saturday Evening Post,* May 4, 1929); Three Rousing Cheers (*Hearst's,* August, 1928).

Marquis, Don—1. O'Meara, The "Mayflower"—and Mrs. MacLirr (a. Williams, 1928; b. When the Turtles Sing, Doubleday); Two Red-Haired Women (a. Williams, 1929; b. A Variety of People, Doubleday, 1929); The Flea, the Pup, and the Millennium (b. When the Turtles Sing); Entirely Logical, The Glass Eater (b. A Variety of People).

Marshall, Edison—1. The Elephant Remembers (a. Williams, 1919). 2. The Heart of Little Shikara (a. Williams, 1921).

Martin, George Madden—2. The Flight, The Blue Handkerchief, Fire from Heaven (b. Children in the Mist, Appleton); The Right Promethean Fire (b. Emmy Lou, Her Book and Her Heart, Doubleday).

Mason, Arthur—2. Donkeyman's Christmas (a. Ward); The Captain's Wife, The Wreckmaster (b. The Cook and the Captain Bold, Atlantic Monthly Press).

Mason, Grace Sartwell—2. Home Brew (a. Williams, 1922); The First Stone (a. O'Brien, 1926).

Matthews, Brander—1. In a Hansom (b. Vistas of New York, Harper); On an Errand of Mercy (a. Pattee; b. Vistas of New York); The Twinkling of an Eye (b. Tales of Fantasy and Fact, Harper); The Rival Ghosts (a. Scarborough, Humorous Ghost Stories; b. Tales of Fantasy and Fact); In Search of Local Color (b. Vignettes of Manhattan, Scribner); An Interview with Miss Marlenspuyk, Men and Women and Horses (b. Outlines in Local Color, Harper); A Cameo and a Pastel, The Story of a Story (b. The Story of a Story, Harper).

Maugham, Somerset—2. Rain (a. Robinson, K.; Georgian, 1922; b. The Trembling of a Leaf, Doran); The Letter (a. World's Best, 1925; b. The Casuarina Tree, Doran); Before the Party, The Yellow Streak (b. The Casuarina Tree); Red, The Pool (b. The Trembling of a Leaf); Red (author's favorite story) may be found in My Favorite Story, International Magazine Co., 1928.

Maupassant, Guy de—1. The Necklace, A Piece of String, The Coward, Happiness, La Mère Sauvage, Moonlight (a. The Odd Number, Harper). (For Happiness, see Jessup, page 419 and Schweikert, page 469; for The Necklace, see translation by Williams, A Book of Short Stories; also, Clark and Lieber, reprint from The Odd Number). 2. Two Friends (a. Translation by Elizabeth Brownell Collier, in Short Stories for College Classes, Williams; b. The Second Odd Number, Harper); The Confession, Little Soldier (The Odd Number); A Ghost (a. See translation by M. Charles Sommer, in Famous Ghosts, Scarborough); The Horla (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott, 26 Mystery Stories); The Legend of Mont St. Michel (a. Rudwin).

Meredith, George—1. General Ople and Lady Camper, and 2. The Tale of Chloe (b. Meredith's Short Stories, Scribner).

Merimée, Prosper—1. Mateo Falcone (a. Williams and Lieber, A Panorama of the Short Story; Clark and Lieber). 2. The Venus of Ille (a. Jessup).

Merrick, Leonard—1. The Tale That Wouldn't Do, The Tragedy

of a Comic Song, The Bishop's Comedy, and 2. A Call from the Past (b. Whispers about Women, Mitchell Kennerley, 1912); 1. The Back of Bohemia, and 2. The Body and Soul of Miss Azulay (b. This Stage of Fools, Kennerley, 1912).

Merwin, Samuel—1. More Stately Mansions (a. World's Best, 1925). 2. The Axiom of Peter Bell Ivor (*Saturday Evening Post*, April 1, 1922).

Metcalfe, John—2. The Bad Lands (a. The Omnibus of Crime; b. The Smoking Leg and Other Stories, Jarrolds, London); Funeral March of a Marionette (a. O'Brien—British—1927); Picnic (a. O'Brien—British—1925).

Middleton, Richard—1. A Tragedy in Little, The Ghost Ship, On the Brighton Road, The Coffin Agent (b. The Ghost Ship, Fisher Unwin, London, 1912). For The Ghost Ship, see also Scarborough's Humorous Ghost Stories.

Miller, Alice Duer—2. Things (volume title, Scribner); Slow Poison (a. Williams, 1920); Plum Pudding and Mince Pie (a. World's Best, 1929).

Mirrielees, Edith—1. Professor Boynton Rereads History (a. Williams, 1924).

Molnar, Ferenc—2. The Silver Hilt (a. Clark and Lieber).

Melville, Herman—2. Benito Cereno (a. The Shorter Novels of Herman Melville, edited by Raymond Weaver, Horace Liveright, 1928; b. The Piazza Tales, Dix and Edwards, 1856); The Lightning-Rod Man (b. Piazza Tales); Billy Budd, Foretopman (a. Weaver).

Montague, C. E.—2. In Hanging Garden Gully (a. Georgian, 1925). Another Temple Gone (a. O'Brien—British—1923; b. Fiery Particles, Doubleday).

Montague, Margaret Prescott—2. England to America (a. Williams, 1919; b. volume title, Doubleday); The Today Tomorrow (a. O'Brien, 1923; b. Up Eel River, Macmillan—written, Today Tomorrer).

Moore, George—2. Julia Cahill's Curse (a. Clark and Lieber; b. The Untilled Field, Brentano's); The Clerk's Quest (a. Lieber and Williams; b. The Untilled Field).

Morand, Paul—2. Queen Mab (a. Best European, 1928); Hungarian Night (a. Dial; Newman—The Nordic Night); The Horse of Genghis Khan (a. Lieber and Williams); Monsieur U (a. Eaton—Best French—1925-1926).

Mordaunt, Elinor—2. The Perfect Wife (a. Georgian, 1922; b.

Old Wine in New Bottles, Hutchinson and Co., London); The Inspired 'Busman (a. O'Brien—British—1923).

Morris, Gouverneur—1. All the Evidence (*Cosmopolitan*, November, 1913); Derrick's Return (a. Williams, 1923); Ig's Amok (a. Williams, 1922); Behind the Door (a. Holmes and Starbuck); The Unsent Letter (a. Holmes and Starbuck). 2. The Claws of the Tiger (b. It, Scribner); The Incandescent Lily (volume title, Scribner); A Postscript to Divorce (a. O'Brien, 1924); If You Touch Them They Vanish (volume title, Scribner).

Morrison, Arthur—1. On the Stairs (a. Williams, A Book of Short Stories; b. Tales of Mean Streets, London, Methuen, 1894). 2. The Lenten Croft Robberies (a. Wright; b. Martin Hewitt, Investigator).

Morrow, W. C. —2. The Monster Maker, A Game of Honor, The Inmate of the Dungeon, The Permanent Stiletto (b. The Ape, The Idiot, and Other People, Lippincott).

Newman, Frances—1. Rachel and Her Children (a. Williams, 1924).

Nicholson, Meredith—2. The Third Man (a. My Story That I Like Best, volume published by International Magazine Co., 1924; b. Best Laid Schemes, Scribner).

Norris, Frank—1. A Reversion to Type, and 2. The Third Circle (b. The Third Circle, John Lane, 1909).

Norris, Kathleen—1. Sinners (a. Williams, 1929); Rising Water (Poor, Dear Margaret Kirby, Doubleday). 2. The Unbecoming Conduct of Annie (a. Aces, Putnam); The Miracle Workers (a. Trumps, Putnam).

O'Brien, Fitz-James—1. The Diamond Lens (a. Jessup; b. Collected Stories, A. and C. Boni, 1925); What Was It? (a. Lieber and Williams; b. Collected Stories); The Golden Ingot, The Lost Room, My Wife's Temper (b. Collected Stories).

O'Flaherty, Liam—2. The Reaping Race (a. O'Brien—British—1925); The Inquisition (a. O'Brien—British—1926); The Sniper (a. O'Brien—British—1923); Spring Sowing (a. O'Brien—British—1924); The Tent (a. Georgian, 1926).

O'Higgins, Harvey J.—1. Sir Watson Tyler (a. Mirrielees; b. From the Life, Harper). 2. Big Dan Reilly (a. Gerould; b. Some Distinguished Americans, Harper).

Osbourne, Lloyd—2. The Happiest Day of His Life (a. Dawson).

Ouida (Louise de la Ramée)—1. A Dog of Flanders.

Page, Thomas Nelson—1. "Marse Chan," "Meh Lady" (b. In Ole Virginia). 2. "Unc' Edinburg's Drownin'" (a. Pattee; b. In Ole Virginia); The True Story of the Surrender of the Marquis Cornwallis, How Relius Bossed the Ranch, A Story of Charles Harris, Her Great Grandmother's Ghost (b. Pastime Stories, Harper, 1894).

Pain, Barry—1. The Marriage of Miranda, and 2. The End of a Show (a. The Omnibus of Crime; b. Stories in the Dark, London). 2. One Hour of Fame, Great Possessions, The Failure of Professor Palbeck (b. Stories without Tears, Stokes); Not on the Passenger List (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott, 26 Mystery Stories); The Celestial Grocery, The Glass of Supreme Moments, The Doll, Too Soon and Too Late, The Diary of a God, The Undying Thing (Collected Tales, Volume I, Stokes); The Face of the Corpse, On Green Paper (a. Wrong); The Key of the Hen-House (a. L. W. Smith, Short Stories); A Considerable Murder (a. The Black Cap, Asquith).

Parker, Dorothy—1. Big Blonde (a. Williams, 1929); A Telephone Call (a. O'Brien, 1928).

Parker, Sir Gilbert—1. Cumner's Son, Derelict, and 2. The Planter's Wife (b. Cumner's Son, Harper); A Prairie Vagabond (a. Dawson).

Patterson, Pernet—2. Buttin' Blood (a. Williams, 1929; World's Best, 1929); "Cunjur" (a. O'Brien, 1929).

Pattullo, George—2. The Tie That Binds (a. Williams, 1924).

Pelley, William Dudley—2. The Face in the Window (a. Williams, 1920; Ward); The Toast to Forty-Five (a. O'Brien, 1918).

Pertwee, Roland—2. Sentimental Rubbish (a. Georgian, 1922); Empty Arms (a. O'Brien—British—1922); Red and White (*Century,* August, 1917); The Gautama Buddha (*Saturday Evening Post,* July 2, 1916); The Cellini Salt-Cellar (b. The Transactions of Lord Louis Lewis, Dodd, Mead).

Perry, Lawrence—1. "A Certain Rich Man—" (a. O'Brien, 1917); A Matter of Loyalty (a. Williams, 1920; b. For the Game's Sake, Scribner).

Peterkin, Julia—1. Maum Lou (a. Williams, 1925); The Red

Rooster (b. Green Thursday, Knopf). 2. A Proudful Fellow (*Century*, May, 1928).

Phillpotts, Eden—1. The Striking Hours (volume title, Methuen, London, 1902). 2. Madonna of the Fireflies, My First Murder, Peacock House (b. Peacock House, Macmillan); Three Dead Men (a. Wright). The Ghost of Miser Brimpson (a. Scarborough, Humorous Ghost Stories; b. Tales of the Tenements, John Lane); Crazywell (a. O'Brien—British—1926).

Pirandello, Luigi—2. A Mere Formality (a. Lieber and Williams); The Tight Frock Coat (a. Eaton—Continental—1924-1925); The Red Note Book (a. Eaton—Continental—1922-1923); The Ttarling and the Angel One-Hundred-and One (a. Eaton, Continental, 1928).

Poe, Edgar Allan—1. The Cask of Amontillado, Ligeia, The Black Cat, The Tell-Tale Heart, The Purloined Letter, Murders in the Rue Morgue, Berenice, William Wilson, Manuscript Found in a Bottle, The Fall of the House of Usher, Facts in the Case of M. Valdemaar (a. Williams, Tales by Edgar Allan Poe, Modern Readers' Series, Macmillan; Campbell, Poe's Short Stories, Harcourt, Brace; b. Works of Edgar Allan Poe, Stedman and Woodberry, New York, 1914). 2. Premature Burial, Loss of Breath, The Gold Bug, The Masque of the Red Death, The Assignation, A Descent into the Maelstrom, The Oblong Box, Metzengerstein (b. Works). Most of Poe's stories have been reprinted many times.

Poole, Ernest—2. The Little Dark Man (volume title, Macmillan).

Post, Melville, Davisson—1. The Doomdorf Mystery (a. Lieber and Williams; b. Uncle Abner, Appleton); Five Thousand Dollars Reward (a. Williams, 1919); The Corpus Delicti (a. Wells; b. The Strange Schemes of Randolph Mason, Putnam, 1896). 2. The Straw Man (a. Wright; b. Uncle Abner, Appleton); The Angel of the Lord (a. Rhys and Dawson-Scott; b. Uncle Abner); The Age of Miracles (a. Starrett; b. Uncle Abner); Two Plungers of Manhattan, The Sheriff of Gullmore (b. The Strange Schemes of Randolph Mason); An Act of God, The Treasure Hunter, A Twilight Adventure, The Mystery of Chance, The Edge of the Shadow (b. Uncle Abner); The Mystery at the Blue Villa, The Pacifist, The Girl from Galacia, The Girl in the

Villa (b. The Mystery at the Blue Villa, Appleton); The Great Cipher, The Haunted Door, The Triangular Hypothesis (b. Monsieur Jonquelle, Appleton); My Friend at Bridge, The Copper Bonds, The Last Check, The Danseuse (b. The Corrector of Destinies, Clode, 1908); The Sleuth of St. James Square (volume title, Appleton, 1920).

Pulver, Mary Brecht—2. The Path of Glory (a. O'Brien, 1917; Lasselle).

Pushkin, Alexander—2. The Queen of Spades, The Shot, Kirdjali (b. Pushkin's Prose Tales, Bohn's Popular Library); The Coffin Maker (a. Lieber and Williams).

Putnam, George Palmer—1. The Sixth Man (a. War Stories, Holmes and Starbuck).

Quiller-Couch, Sir Arthur T.—1. A Conspiracy aboard the *Midas,* A Corrected Contempt, Love of Naomi, The Regent's Wager, and 2. The Drawn Blind (b. The Delectable Duchy, Scribner); Ye Sexes, Give Ear (b. Shakespeare's Christmas); The Roll-Call of the Reef (a. Great Ghost Stories, J. L. French); The Mayor's Dovecote (a. O'Brien—British —1923).

Rideout, Henry Milner—2. Powers of Darkness, Seeds of Time, Surf Rats (b. Tao Tales, Duffield).

Rinehart, Mary Roberts—2. Cynara: The Sculptor (a. Samples, Boni and Liveright); The Trumpet Sounds (World's Best, 1927); Bab, A Sub-Deb, Doran, 1917; Love Stories, 1919; Affinities, 1920. Volumes now published by Doubleday, Doran. Twenty-Two (a. Aces, Putnam).

Roberts, Morley—2. The Old Ancient Ship, The Smile of La Gioconda (a. Short Stories of Today and Yesterday, Harrap, London).

Robertson, Morgan—1. The Closing of the Circuit (Down to the Sea). 2. Primordial (Where Angels Fear to Tread); The Wreck of the Titan (volume title). Autograph Edition, published by *McClure's Magazine* and *Metropolitan Magazine.*

Robbins, Leonard H.—1. Mr. Downey Sits Down (a. Williams, 1921; Royster); Professor Todd's Used Car (a. Williams, 1920).

Russell, John—1. The Fourth Man (a. Mirrielees; b. The Red Mark, Knopf); Jetsam (a. Gerould; b. The Red Mark);

The Slaver, The Witch Woman (b. In Dark Places, Knopf). 2. The Price of the Head (a. Rhys; b. The Red Mark).

Sass, Herbert Ravenel—2. Gray Eagle (volume title, Minton, Balch).

Saxon, Lyle—1. Cane River (a. Williams, 1926; O'Brien, 1927).

Schnitzler, Arthur—2. The Triple Warning (a. Clark and Lieber; b. Masks and Miracles); Flowers (a. Lieber and Williams); The Greek Dancer (a. Dial).

Sedgwick, Anne Douglas—1. The Suicide, and 2. Miss Jones and the Masterpiece (b. The Nest, Century Co., 1913); Christmas Roses (volume title, Houghton, Mifflin).

Sherwood, Robert E.—1. "Extra! Extra!" (a. O'Brien, 1926; Brewster).

Sidney, Rose—1. Butterflies (a. Williams, 1920; O'Brien, 1920; Williams, Thrice Told Tales, 1924).

Sinclair, May—1. The Pin-Prick (*Harper's*, February, 1915); The Fault, The Return of the Prodigal (b. The Return of The Prodigal, Macmillan); If the Dead Knew, Where Their Fire is not Quenched, and 2. The Token, The Victim, The Finding of the Absolute (b. Uncanny Stories, London, Hutchinson); Lena Wrace (a. O'Brien—British—1922).

Singmaster, Elsie—1. The Courier of the Czar (a. Williams, 1924; b. Bred in the Bone, Houghton, Mifflin). 2. Truth (b. Bred in the Bone); The Survivors (a. O'Brien, 1915); Penance (a. O'Brien, 1916); The Braggart (*Saturday Evening Post*, December 3, 1927); A Friend (*Saturday Evening Post*, October 13, 1928); A Special Providence (*Collier's*, April 13, 1929); November the Nineteenth (a. World's Best, 1925).

Sitwell, Edith—2 Undergrowth (a. O'Brien—British—1924).

Sitwell, Osbert—2. The Greeting (a. Georgian, 1925); The Machine Breaks Down (a. O'Brien—British—1923).

Slade, Caroline—1. Mrs. Sabin (a. Williams, 1929).

Slosson, Annie Trumbull—1. A Local Colorist (a. Ramsay). 2. Fishin' Jimmy (volume title, Scribner); Story-Tell Lib (volume title, Scribner).

Smith, Edgar Valentine—1. Prelude (a. Williams, 1923). 2. 'Lijah (a. Williams, 1924; Knickerbocker).

Smith, Francis Hopkinson—1. Plain Fin, Paper Hanger, and 2. The Crime of Samanthy North, Bud Tilden, Mail Thief, Eleven Months and Ten Days (b. The Under Dog); The

Veiled Lady of Stamboul (volume title); The Girl in the Steamer Chair (The Wood-Fire in No. 3). Titles in parentheses, volumes published by Scribner.

Smith, Gordon Arthur—2. Feet of Gold (a. O'Brien, 1916); No Flowers (a. Williams, 1920).

Soïberg, Harry—2. The Old Boat (a. Denmark's Best Stories, Norton).

Spears, Raymond S.—2. A River Combine—Professional (a. Williams, 1924).

Spofford, Harriet Prescott—1. The Amber Gods (b. The Amber Gods and Other Stories, 1863). 2. Circumstance (a. Pattee).

Springer, Fleta—2. Legend (a. Harper Prize; Knickerbocker); Solitaire (a. O'Brien, 1918); The Rotter (a. O'Brien, 1920).

Starrett, Vincent—2. Coffins for Two, Thirty Pieces of Silver (b. Coffins for Two, Covici-McGee).

Steele, Wilbur Daniel—1. Blue Murder (a. Williams, 1925; Lieber and Williams; Williams, Short Stories for College Classes); Footfalls (a. Williams, 1920; Brewster); The Anglo-Saxon (a. Williams, 1922); Pioneers (*Harper's* July, 1929); Quicksilver (*Harper's*, August, 1929); Lightning (a. Williams, 1928); The Man Who Saw through Heaven (a. Williams; 1925; Goodman); For They Know not What They Do (a. Williams, 1919; b. Tower of Sand, Harper); What Do You Mean—Americans? (a. Williams, 1924); The Silver Sword (a. Williams, 1929); The Marriage in Kairwan (a. Williams, 1921); "Arab-Stuff" (a. Mirrielees); Bubbles (a. Williams, 1926). 2. Out of the Wind (a. O'Brien, 1926); Six Dollars (a. O'Brien, 1925); When Hell Froze (a. Harper Prize); From the Other Side of the South (a. O'Brien, 1922); The Shame Dance (a. O'Brien, 1921; b. The Shame Dance, Harper); Out of Exile (a. O'Brien, 1920); Down on Their Knees (a. O'Brien, 1916; Royster); Ching, Ching, Chinaman (a. O'Brien, 1917); A Man's a Fool (a. Gerould); The Gray Goose (a. L. W. Smith, Short Stories, Lippincott); Sooth (a. Brown). See volumes, Land's End, The Shame Dance, Urkey Island, The Man Who Saw through Heaven, Tower of Sand, Harper.

Stephens, James—1. Hunger (b. Etched in Moonlight, Macmillan). 2. Desire (a. Dial; b. Etched in Moonlight).

Stern, G. B.—2. "The Eleventh Hat" (a. Aces, Putnam); A Man and His Mother (a. Georgian, 1926).

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